



THE BRAILLE MONITOR

Voice of the
National Federation of the Blind

MAY - 1972

The National Federation of the Blind is not an organization speaking for the blind--it is the blind speaking for themselves.

THE BRAILLE MONITOR

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If you or a friend wish to remember the National Federation of the Blind in your will, you can do so by employing the following language:

"I give, devise, and bequeath unto NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND, a District of Columbia non-profit corporation, the sum of \$_____ (or, "_____ percent of my net estate", or "the following stocks and bonds: _____") to be used for its worthy purposes on behalf of blind persons and to be held and administered by direction of its Executive Committee."

If your wishes are more complex, you may have your attorney communicate with the Berkeley Office for other suggested forms.

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EARLY--BUT HOW EARLY:
THE CHICAGO CONVENTION
by

Kenneth Jernigan

Each year the National Convention is becoming more packed with activities and events. Thus, the need for this letter. In earlier bulletins I had already told you that the Resolutions Committee would hold its first meeting at 1:30, Sunday afternoon, July 2. Then, Tony Mannino called me to say that he felt that the White Cane luncheon we have been holding each year to, discuss fundraising for the State and local affiliates did not give enough time and that we ought to do away with it and have a longer meeting at some other time during the Convention. Tony and I agreed that the White Cane meeting would occur at 8:00 o'clock Sunday night, July 2. The purpose of the meeting would be to talk about National White Cane Week and all other types of fundraising efforts by State and local affiliates. This will certainly be an important meeting, and I hope that all affiliates will be well represented at it.

Next, Janiece Conard contacted me to talk about the music group. She pointed out that many of those who might be interested in attending the music group wanted to attend other group meetings. For example, she wishes to attend the teachers group herself. Thus, (see the following article) she asked whether we could not schedule the music group for 7:30, Sunday evening, July 2. I agreed. Who am I to stop a meeting if people want to get together?

This morning Curtis Willoughby came to me to say that the data processing group (The National Federation of the

Blind in Computer Science) felt that the time allotted to group meetings from 1:00 to 5:00 Monday afternoon was not sufficient for their purposes. He asked that I approve meetings of the NFB in Computer Science for Sunday morning and Sunday afternoon, as well as the Monday afternoon meeting already scheduled. After considerable discussion we compromised. The NFB in Computer Science group will meet from 1:00 to 5:00 Sunday afternoon, July 2, and from 1:00 to 5:00 Monday afternoon, July 3.

I asked Curt Willoughby what he intended to do with the time, and he said that there would be a great deal of technical discussion about techniques, equipment, specialized schools for blind programmers, attendance of blind persons at regular schools, and similar things. He said that employers and representatives from the schools would be present for the meetings and that the exchange would be interesting and meaningful.

Therefore, Sunday, July 2, shapes up as a full day. Registration and the exhibit room will be in full swing that morning. The NFB in Computer Science and the Resolutions Committee will begin at 1:00 and 1:30 p.m. respectively. The Music Division and the White Cane meeting will take place Sunday evening. Besides this, there will be much socializing and a great many informal get-togethers.

Monday, of course, will begin with the Executive Committee meeting (open to all, and usually attended by all) at 9:00 in the morning. From 1:00 to 5:00 in the afternoon the various groups and divisions will meet, and activities are being planned for Monday evening.

In accordance with the format of past years, the first full business session of the Convention will open at 10:00 o'clock, Tuesday morning, July 4. The meeting will adjourn at noon and take up again at 2:00 p.m., running until 5:00. The Wednesday session will go from 9:30 in the morning until noon, at which time we will adjourn for lunch and then the tours. Remember that the tours offer a wide variety of choices—a visit to various programs for the blind, a trip to the Museum of Science and Industry, or, a personal guide for a shopping tour through Chicago's stores.

Convention sessions for both Thursday and Friday will run from 9:30 in the morning to noon and from 2:00 to 5:00. The Banquet will take place Thursday evening. There is every indication that we will have upwards of 1500 people present.

I hope that, with all of this in mind, every affiliate will be well represented and that as many members as possible will be on hand for the Sunday activities. I keep hearing of more and more buses being chartered and of large delegations being planned. It promises to be our biggest, best, and most exciting Convention ever. If you have not sent in your reservations to the Palmer House Hotel, please do so at once. Remember that the rates are only \$8 for singles, and \$12 for doubles and twins. See you in Chicago.

Incidentally, let notice be served: If anybody, now or in the future, asks to have a meeting scheduled prior to 1:00 o'clock on Sunday afternoon at the NFB Convention, the answer is simple—NO WAY.

NFB MUSIC DIVISION

by

Janiece A. Conard

Practicing musicians, students, and those who like to participate actively in making music are urged to attend one of the first events of the 1972 NFB Convention, a Music Division meeting at 7:30 p.m., Sunday, July 2. The meeting is scheduled at this time because of the many musicians who must attend meetings of other divisions on Monday.

Proposed topics of discussion are:

The formation of a continuing interest group for musicians in the Federation;

The best kind of fake book—recorded or Braille;

What kind of music we need to develop our art;

Materials and books for the music teacher;

College barriers for the music student;

Other matters important to blind musicians.

We anticipate having a music exhibit of books and aids throughout the Convention; additional meetings can also be scheduled where the Convention agenda permits. The main theme is that we should move ahead at presto tempo.

Think about these problems: Imagine being turned down for a degree program in composition or a brass education major

because you are blind. Imagine being turned away from an agent for the same reason. Would it not be worthwhile to be able to type inkprint music notation on a typewriter?

Give a little thought to your problems and successes as a blind musician. Others may have solved your problem, and you may be able to help in solving theirs. We can also influence national agencies in their selection and publication policies; and we can help to change the rules of music through our collective action.

Please join us. Numbers this year will bring more exhibits and activities next year. Come to the meeting whether your bag is Burt Bacharach or Bela Bartok, Mancini or Landini, Lynn Anderson or Laurendo Almeida, Joan Baez or Hector Berlioz.

MAKE THE HONOR ROLL

All affiliate presidents, all chapter presidents, and all members of the National Federation of the Blind are hereby asked to remember that at the forthcoming Convention of the National Federation of the Blind in July, the honor roll of States will be called to announce each State affiliate's contribution or pledge to the Dr. Jacobus tenBroek Memorial Endowment Fund of the National Federation of the Blind. This Fund is one of the most important activities of the National Federation of the Blind because it serves to express our regard for the immense contributions to the welfare of the blind which were made by Dr. Jacobus tenBroek and because it

will serve some day to provide sufficient income to finance the magnificent work of our great organization. Let every chapter, let every affiliate, let every member come forth with a generous contribution in honor of the occasion.

COMPUTER SERVICES FOR THE BLIND

by
Emerson Foulke

[Editor's Note: Dr. Foulke is a member of the Department of Psychology and the Director of the Perceptual Alternatives Laboratory at the University of Louisville, Kentucky.]

The ARTS System (Audio Response Time-Sharing), developed by Dr. Kenneth Ingham at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, consists of a time-sharing computer, programmed to perform a wide variety of services for blind users, and an audio response unit that transduces the computer output to spoken language. The system is connected through sixteen telephone lines to the telephone system. The users' terminal, which connects to ordinary telephone lines, includes two inputs, a standard typewriter keyboard and a keyboard resembling the keyboard on a ten key calculator, and an output consisting of a loudspeaker over which the listener hears the computer's response as spoken language. The user gains access to the computer by dialing the computer's telephone number. When he has established a connection to the computer, he types a code on his keyboard that identifies him to the computer, and he is ready to request and receive the services the computer is programmed to provide. Since the ARTS System's time-sharing

computer is connected to sixteen telephone lines, it can serve sixteen operators simultaneously, and it is estimated that it can provide services for 300 operators on a daily basis.

At its present stage of development, the ARTS System can provide the assistance needed by blind students and blind practitioners in a wide variety of professions and occupations in order to compete on equal terms with their sighted peers. Here are some examples of services now available.

It can serve as a dictionary. The operator types the word he wants defined on his standard typewriter keyboard. If he has spelled it correctly, he hears, over his loudspeaker, the full dictionary text relating to the word. If he has spelled it incorrectly, he first hears it correctly spelled, followed by the full dictionary text.

It can provide the blind businessman with a full bookkeeping and accounting service. He types his bookkeeping entries on the appropriate keyboard and they are recorded and filed in the appropriate categories by the computer. He can request the computer to perform accounting operations in order to develop the information he needs to make business decisions. All of the information he has filed in the computer, is, of course, available to him instantly on demand.

The computer will perform for the operator the full range of functions available on the modern calculator. He can program, from his keyboard, the sequence of operations required in complex analyses.

The ARTS System can serve as a personal secretary. As the blind operator types a letter or other composition, each typed character may be pronounced, if he wishes. If he is interrupted momentarily, he may ask to hear the last word or sentence he has typed. When he has typed the entire composition, he may hear it in its entirety in order to proofread and correct it. Once corrected, an execute command will cause it to be typed, in proper format. The typed copy is available to the operator, and the composition may also be filed in the computer for later recall.

The ARTS System can receive information from other computers, operate on this information, store it, retrieve it, and transduce it to spoken language, thus enabling the blind operator to work as a computer programmer. Many blind persons are now employed as computer programmers, but arranging for sensible computer output is a continuing problem for them. The ARTS System solves this problem.

The ARTS System can provide programmed instruction in Braille for the newly blinded adult. In this application, the student receives his instruction orally. His efforts to produce Braille characters on a Braille printer, which can easily be connected at his terminal, are evaluated by the computer. This printer can also be actuated by the computer in order to produce instructional materials for his examination.

In a further extension of its instructional potential, the ARTS System can provide to its users a wide range of computer assisted instruction. Possibilities include academic subjects, such as

mathematics and foreign languages, prevocational subjects, such as basic arithmetic operations and English grammar, and vocational subjects, such as electronics and computer programming.

The ARTS System will make possible a greatly increased supply of Braille reading matter for use by blind students. Any person who is an accurate typist can type on the standard typewriter keyboard at an ARTS terminal. The input thus generated is processed by the computer, which then actuates a Braille printer, producing properly contracted Grade Two Braille. Thus, it is no longer necessary for the person who wishes to transcribe printed matter into Braille to prepare himself for this task by mastering an esoteric skill. Transcription can be accomplished by anyone who knows how, to type.

The computer can store large quantities of general information, likely to be of interest to its clients, and produce it on demand. It could, for instance, provide a reading service which might include daily news summaries, a calendar of events, best-selling books, weather information, etc.

The examples just given constitute only a few of the services the ARTS System can now provide. The inclusion of additional services is limited only by the imagination of the programmers who create the system's software.

Dr. Ingham hopes to deploy the ARTS System throughout the United States. He has recently received backing from the Protestant Guild for the Blind in order to pursue this objective. He is currently arranging for the delivery of

ARTS services to clients in the greater Boston area. On a recent visit to Dr. Ingham's laboratory, I was acquainted with the capabilities of the ARTS System and, upon my return to Kentucky, I proposed to Mr. T. V. Cranmer that these services also be made available to the blind citizens of Kentucky. After studying the materials I made available to him, Mr. Cranmer appointed a steering committee to evaluate the feasibility of the ARTS System in Kentucky, and to work toward its realization if it seemed feasible. The members of this committee visited Dr. Ingham's laboratory at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, where they had the opportunity to observe a prototype of the ARTS System in operation, and to question Dr. Ingham concerning its problems and capabilities. They returned from their visit convinced of the economic feasibility of the system, and of its enormous potential as a rehabilitation tool. Accordingly, the committee formulated and is taking all necessary steps to implement the plan; a description of which follows.

A public corporation, to be known as Computer Services for the Blind (CSB), is to be formed. This corporation will be governed by a board of persons qualified by interest, ability, and experience to render such service. A bill has been prepared and submitted to the Kentucky State Legislature for consideration during its current legislative session. This bill will provide the money needed to purchase computing machinery and other necessary equipment, and to cover operating expense for the first two years of CSB's life. We expect that by the end of the second year of operation, CSB will be serving 300 blind clients in the state of Kentucky, and will be earning enough

income to cover its operating expenses. The CSB client will purchase the service he receives from CSB. The exact cost of this service has not yet been determined, but it will be kept as low as possible so that CSB services can be made available to all blind persons who want them. The ARTS facility operated by CSB will be located in Louisville, since the Louisville community has the highest concentration of potential clients who could gain access to the system through local telephone service. If the facility were located elsewhere, these clients would have to gain access over long distance telephone lines, and the operating expense would be greatly increased. Clients living elsewhere in the state will have to gain access over long distance lines, but the cost of long distance telephone service will be charged to CSB, and not to the user.

The University of Louisville has made available, without charge, the space needed for the computing machinery and for the staff who will operate the ARTS facility. The staff will include a director and a technical programming assistant.

There is little doubt that the ARTS System will prove to be economically feasible. The services it can provide to blind clients throughout the state would be much more expensive if they were made available in conventional ways. Beyond this, its role as an educational and rehabilitative tool challenges the imagination. Blind students and blind practitioners of occupations and professions will be able to obtain from the ARTS System the services that are ordinarily provided by sighted assistance. Thus, they will be on an equal footing with their sighted peers in the classroom and in many occupational settings.

TRIBUTE TO
SENATOR VANCE HARTKE
by
John F. Nagle

Honorable Vance Hartke
Senate Office Building
Washington, D. C.

Dear Senator Hartke:

The National Federation of the Blind wishes to express its appreciation to you for your many services to the blind of the nation and to thank you for your continuing concern for the welfare of blind people.

You have always recognized that blind people know their needs best and have always worked constantly and steadfastly with us since becoming a member of the United States Senate, that we might better be able to attain our goal of independent lives.

Shortly after coming to Washington, you secured passage of a long-sought objective of the organized blind movement--when the \$85.00 plus 50% earned income exemption was made law primarily through your efforts.

This mechanism put real rehabilitation in the Federal-State program of aid to the blind.

And since its adoption in 1960, this innovation has been incorporated into the other adult welfare programs, into the economic opportunity programs and the manpower training and development program.

In working for the approval of the

earned income exemption, you shared with us our belief that blind people, able and wanting to work, should be encouraged and helped to work their way--from reliance upon relief to employment in gainful and constructive jobs.

Later, when we, blind people, came to you and said the earnings exemption was too limited and needed broadening, again you understood the need for change in federal law, that federal law might not serve as a barrier to the efforts of aspiring and ambitious blind people.

You proposed that when a blind person on public assistance was working toward the goal of an approved rehabilitation plan for achieving self-support, all of his earnings and resources should be available to him to help him in his efforts, that his aid grant should not be reduced.

As a result of your labors in the Finance Committee and on the Senate floor, a measure was adopted exempting all income and resources of a blind aid recipient working toward fulfillment of a rehabilitation plan, and it was made mandatory on the states for twelve months, and later you were able to have it extended for an additional twenty-four months, optional with the states.

In 1965, we, blind people, came to you again and told you the Social Security-based Disability Insurance Program was failing utterly to meet the needs of blind people--and you made our Disability Insurance for the Blind Bill yours, in your belief that this proposal would go far toward eliminating the disadvantages and inequalities of trying to

function without sight in a sighted world and in a sight-directed economy.

You have gotten our disability bill through the Senate three times--and your determination to secure ultimate passage of this measure has not diminished with the repeated failure of House-Senate conferees to accept this legislation, but rather, your determination has increased.

Although we who are blind can point to specific measures that are now public laws because of your efforts and are helping blind people because your efforts have changed Senate bills into Federal laws, still, our appreciation of you goes far beyond these specific matters.

Most of all, we are grateful to you for your comradeship, that you have become a partisan in our cause and have always worked with us, you have never worked for us.

You have always joined with us that we might strive and achieve together.

For this we thank you most of all.

Sincerely yours,

John F. Nagle, Chief
Washington Office

JFN:nlf

BLIND MAN RULED OUT AS JUROR

[Editor's Note: The following article is reprinted from *The White Cane*, official magazine of the Washington State Association of the Blind. Apparently this sort of discrimination against the blind is widespread. At the end of January of this year, the president of the Capitol Chapter (Sacramento) of the NFB of California was denied the right to serve as a juror by the Jury Commissioner of Sacramento County under the provisions of Section 198 of the California Code of Civil Procedure that states "A person is competent to act as a juror if he be in possession of his natural faculties." The Jury Commissioner stated: "Since sight is considered a natural faculty this section automatically precludes a blind person from serving on jury duty."]

The date was January 17, 1972, at eight o'clock a.m. for Bob Reintsma to appear at the King County Court House, Seattle, "—to serve as a petit juror until the 10th day of February 1972." His name had come up on the list for duty in the Superior Court of Washington for King County. So, Bob Reintsma, a very busy real estate agent in the firm of Capretto & Clark, appeared as directed, only to be told he would be disqualified because of blindness. It was asserted by the court attendant that no blind person could serve as a juror because such a juror would be incapable of examining the exhibits and otherwise observing what was happening.

A few days later, Mr. Reintsma, accompanied by the White Cane Editor, discussed the matter with the Presiding Judge in his chambers. The Judge expressed the opinion that a blind person would be incompetent to serve as a juror.

He said it was also a matter of law and cited RCW 2.36.070 on qualifications of jurors, particularly points (4) and (5), which read as follows:

"No person shall be competent to serve as a juror in the superior courts of Washington unless he be

(4) in full possession of his faculties and of sound mind

(5) able to read and write the English language.

Mr. Reintsma stated that he had been in court before, as a witness, as a defendant, and as an interested party, and that he felt that the general run of exhibits and testimony in court would present no obstacle to a person just because they were blind. Mr. Reintsma, a quiet, unassuming man, stated his belief that a blind person could best overcome misunderstanding about blindness and convince the sighted as to their capabilities and abilities by good everyday performance and exposure in normal pursuits. But when a person is denied the right to participate and demonstrate his ability, then other ways must be found. He felt that the law as it reads was open to interpretation, and if necessary, it should be taken to the legislature for correction.

... Inquiry has failed to disclose if any other blind persons in the state have either served as jurors or been denied because of their blindness. We would appreciate hearing of any other experiences.

LADY WITH A MISSION

[Editor's Note: On March 4, 1972 there was held in Des Moines, Iowa the organizational and planning session of the National Federation of the Blind's Committee on the Senior Blind. President Jernigan appointed the following to this important Committee: Jesse Anderson of Utah; Albert Beasley of Mississippi; Jim Coutts of Missouri; Ray Dinsmore of Indiana; Joseph Jablonski of Massachusetts; John Knall of Ohio; Wesley Osborne of Washington; George Reed of the District of Columbia; Joseph Spence of Delaware; Perry Sundquist of California; John N. Taylor of Iowa; Dorothea Vogel of New York; and Carolyn Helmer of California as Chairman. Following is a profile of Mrs. Helmer.]

Aging and Blindness—Twin Challenges too often shelved in favor of other legislative priorities—will receive more “voice” in the social and political arena this year.

The “voice” is that of Mrs. Carolyn Helmer, Los Angeles, newly-appointed Chairman of the NFB Committee on the Senior Blind, who devotes her working day to the adult blind and their problems. Mrs. Helmer's studies started at Reed College in Portland, Oregon, and she received her BA at UCLA. She took graduate work at UCLA and at the University of Southern California.

She is very “familiar” with the problems of the adult blind. Eight years ago she began to lose her eyesight from glaucoma, one of the principal causes of blindness. “It was a catastrophic blow,” she recalls. “I grew up in the Northwest, (born in Portland, Oregon, to be exact)

and lived once in a logging community surrounded by beautiful mountains and trees, scenery which I loved to paint and draw.”

Such thoughts are not unusual for a newly-blinded person, who, sometimes by necessity and sometimes by choice, has a tendency to withdraw from the world. The problem is compounded for those over 50 and for those who have to make new adjustments in their life situation.

“The fearful darkness shuts out the friendly smile, the brilliance of the sunset, the colors of nature—even familiar objects become strange,” Mrs. Helmer relates. “At this point the newly-blinded often ask themselves: ‘Is it possible to go on?’”

Mrs. Helmer, a tall, slender brunet, who has energy to spare, the self-discipline of a leader, and who, by nature, has a curiosity about life surpassed by few, found a way “to go on,” not only making a satisfactory adjustment to her own situation, but likewise, helping others “in the same boat.” These values to the community have been rewarded by two community awards from the Adult School System and from the Lion's Club. With the philosophy that the blind can lead the blind, Mrs. Helmer helped to promote the REAP (Recreation, Education, Adult Program) of the Active Blind, Inc., 1419 South Wilton Place, Los Angeles, (the old Crenshaw Mansion).

“When newly-blinded people come into our headquarters, they invariably say, ‘But I'm blind.’ My answer always is, ‘That makes two of us.’”

In eight years the program has taught approximately 500 sightless persons to

lead active lives. "Our job is to get all our blind back into the mainstream of society and to keep them achieving," she says. "We have to convince them and show them how it's possible to go on."

The three R's of our REAP Program are RE-ACCEPTANCE, (as blind individuals), REVALUATION (in terms of our new skills), and RENEWAL (the motivation to continue toward new goals).

A keen sense of humor, an uncanny ability to plan, organize, supervise, and follow through in the most challenging of situations, and an abounding love of humanity, have endeared her to the adult blind. Frequently, in between her busy schedule of directing activities of REAP and teaching psychology and history in the Los Angeles adult school system, Mrs. Helmer helps many sightless people with welfare, housing, and personal problems. In addition, she is a charter member of the Los Angeles AAWB, is on the Los Angeles welfare committee of the NFB of California and is a member of the Los Angeles and Hollywood Chambers of Commerce. In her campaign to focus more local, state, and national attention on the problems of the adult blind, Mrs. Helmer has carried a big "cane." On the local level, she is a past president of Active Blind, Inc., a member of the Los Angeles Committee of the American Foundation for the Blind, and currently is serving her sixth year as executive director of REAP. At the State level, she has been the State Consultant for the senior blind of the National Federation of the Blind of California. In May 1971, she was a delegate to the California White House Conference on Aging in Sacramento. Last month, Kenneth Jernigan, President of the National Federation of the Blind,

appointed her Chairman of the Committee on the Senior Blind. In her new position Mrs. Helmer hopes to make this Committee of the Federation a very forceful and functional entity. The NFB committee will implement and focus on problems such as income, maintenance, housing, transportation, health, etc.

"I have nothing against young people and they deserve all they receive, but 90 per cent of all funds for the blind are spent on the young. Only about 10 per cent is spent on the blind person over 50 years of age. It's a shame more effort and money aren't being spent for the aged blind! You see, although many of us loathe to acknowledge it, much of our leadership achievement comes out of this senior group. With continued encouragement more of our older citizens will join in our total effort."

NEW YORK LOBBY OF THE BLIND

by

Rita Chernow

[Reprinted from *The Eyecatcher*, publication of the Empire State Association of the Blind.]

The Beginning of a Start:

For many years, the blind have fought an endless, unrewarding, unresolved war against a society which prefers to hinder "the wheels of progress" and consider the blind as second-class citizens. Various agencies, organizations and clubs (both governmental and private) have evolved to serve the blind. Unresponsive and frequently irresponsible, these facilities are often indifferent and

fail to meet the needs of those they are representing. Disheartened, disillusioned and dissatisfied, the blind continue to seek a foundation from which to build more meaningful lives for themselves.

Late in the summer of 1971, an interested, energetic, optimistic group of blind people, determined to change the public's image of the blind and the blind's image of themselves, endeavored to gain support for passage of legislation beneficial to the blind. With the encouragement and leadership of Mr. Brian Sharoff, Brooklyn State Assemblyman, they began to organize. A general meeting was called, and on October 2, 1971, 40 blind people gathered in an effort to further their own cause.

The theme of the meeting focused on the general, already known problems of the blind and blindness with discussion centering on personal experiences and suggestions relating to those experiences. Twenty-two proposals with regard to housing, education, vocational training and financial assistance had previously been delivered to Rockefeller Headquarters in New York City. Interestingly, the majority of complaints and criticisms expressed implicated many City and State Agencies in acts of discrimination. Mr. Sharoff presided at the meeting and indicated that if we waited for others to do our work, we would be a long time waiting. He emphasized a strong need for "togetherness." Radio editorials and press conferences brought favorable publicity, and the New York Lobby of the Blind was on its way.

Two subsequent meetings made it increasingly apparent that a necessity existed for blind people, as well as the

organizations and agencies involved with them, to air their feelings and confront each other. Greatly motivated, the Lobby Group, with the assistance of Mr. Sharoff, scheduled a Special Legislative Hearing on THE PROBLEMS OF THE BLIND. Dozens of letters and telephone calls communicated the purpose and function of the Hearing, and anyone desiring to testify was invited to speak. Hopefully, City and State Agencies, as well as private organizations, would participate and listen with an open heart and mind while others participated.

The Hearing--January 21, 1972:

The State Office Building at 270 Broadway in New York City is a familiar site to many blind New Yorkers as it once housed the New York State Commission for the Blind. On this day, however, the blind might look upon this building with a new, more positive attitude. Today, for those who could attend, an innovation would unfold before them. For the first time in the history of this State, the blind would have an opportunity to speak on their own behalf, to challenge the action and authority of others, and to be heard rather than just listened to.

Mr. Sharoff, along with other members of the State Legislature from New York City, and Mr. Al Levinson, Chairman of the New York Lobby of the Blind, opened the Hearing, calling upon Professor Ed Lewinson, Seton Hall University. Among the several items Professor Lewinson discussed was the fact that blind people are denied the right to serve on juries and of blind and physically handicapped New Yorkers to file complaints of alleged discrimination with the State Commission on Human Rights.

Following this, came an array of statements by representatives of the National Accreditation Council and the State Department of Labor—Division of Employment, respectively. Professor Irving Lukoff, Columbia University School of Social Work, who is actively involved with a group of disabled people, pledged his continued support towards a more cohesive union of all handicapped people.

That some 25-30 blind people presented testimony was to be expected, as this was their Hearing, arranged for them and by them. Unique was that their contributions covered every aspect pertaining to the significant situations, experiences and dilemmas of the blind. Students told of the financial stress and hardship placed upon them and the lack of rapport between themselves and their rehabilitation counselors.

Social Workers reiterated their struggle to attain promotions even when having passed Civil Service Examinations with high grades. Teachers explained how they still must "prove themselves" in order to teach in the New York City School System regardless of their capabilities, capacities and qualifications. The secretaries, sheltered workshop employees, piano tuners, vending and newspaper stand owners and employees, and those who were presently unemployed, added a broadness to the Hearing in that blind people with varied backgrounds jumped at an opportunity to cast light on dark, sometimes forgotten issues. How wonderful it was to see all these people, many of whom did not know each other, stand up and be counted together.

Discrimination in housing, education

and public facilities was drawn out by the persistent, consistent cries of discrimination in employment where the blind suffer at the hands of a cruel, indignant society; an issue which will not be alleviated until there is an educated and understanding public.

Ironically, neither the City nor the State Agencies (Human Rights, Civil Service, Commission for Visually Handicapped, etc.) thought it necessary to send representatives to this Hearing. The Private Organizations (The Lighthouse, Jewish Guild for the Blind, Industrial Home for the Blind) did not see such a necessity either. Perhaps they felt no need to defend their positions and actions. However, their absence spoke for itself. The blind have always considered these agencies and organizations unconcerned and disinterested, now they have their proof.

What legislation, if any, will come of this Hearing cannot be determined at this time, but it is hoped that the blind will be incorporated in the Anti-Discrimination Law. A full report of this Hearing, along with portions of testimony, will be offered on the Floor of the State Assembly. WBAI Radio taped the entire Hearing and took some still pictures.

To say that this was a day well spent would be an understatement; for there could be no compensating the wealth of information and material presented. In my own testimony, I stated, "There are times when you think you know something, and there are times when you know that you know it." I know that through a coordinated blind effort, we will see many of our goals become reality. We have already seen a start—a start that was a long

time in coming—a start that will be in vain unless we all dedicate ourselves to a

successful finish.

MEET OUR STATE PRESIDENT—PAULINE GOMEZ AND MEET OUR STATE AFFILIATE—NEW MEXICO

I am a native New Mexican, and a resident of Santa Fe, with a family history dating back to the Spanish conquest of this area. My mother, my brother's family, and I are a very close group, and our relationship has been an important contributing factor to whatever success I have made as a person.

I have operated a full-fledged preschool education center here, since 1946. Los Ninos Kindergarten is now an established institution of this community.

I became blind shortly after birth, and as a matter of course, attended The New Mexico School for the Visually Handicapped, graduating from there in 1940. Unfortunately, I was the first blind student to graduate from The University of New Mexico, and I received a degree in elementary education.

My becoming a teacher of sighted children was a complete reverse from the objectives I had set for myself, after attending a school for the blind, and then one year at Perkins in Boston. A young World War II widowed mother of a preschool child frantic with her inability

to find a reliable kindergarten in which to enroll her youngster, pleaded with me to use my talents toward this end.



My work, my responsibilities at home, my active participation in educational and civic organizations in my locality, my frequent enrollment at National College of Education in Chicago, and my deep involvement in the objectives of The National Federation of the Blind of New Mexico, make life very worthwhile.

I have been a member of our state affiliate since our chartering in 1956, but extremely active after benefiting from and attending the California Orientation Center in 1959. Following this experience, I served as president of the State organization for five years, and before I was asked to take this office again, I served on the State board, and as president of our Santa Fe local chapter. The National Federation of the Blind of New Mexico has made several touchdowns legislatively. First, in 1963, when we were successful in relinquishing \$1500 from the hands of thrifty legislators, for a study of our program, and then again in 1967, when we managed to

promote the passage of five out of six bills, two of these being the delicate "right to organize bill," and The White Cane Law in its entirety. We now boast a family of five chapters, and our future looks very secure because we are bringing in real workers and leaders into the fold. I am certain also, that the 1959 National Federation of the Blind Convention in Santa Fe, will long be remembered.

MINORITY BUSINESS CONCESSIONS

The Minority Business Concessions Program is, in reality, a more generous Randolph-Sheppard Act for other minority groups—Blacks, Spanish-surname Americans, Indians, Aleuts, and Orientals. Its purpose is to set up "five and dime" stores in Federal buildings. While the program statement declares that "No concessions should be established ... which compete with blind-operated vending stands, or which compete with *existing* cafeteria or other food service concessions," experience has already demonstrated that such competition does exist.

Some of the dangers of the new program to the older one were pointed out by John Nagle when he testified on the Randolph-Sheppard Act Amendments in September 1971 before the Senate Committee on Handicapped Workers when he stated:

"And now, Mr. Chairman, the vending stand program for the blind is threatened from a new direction and the blind—but a very small and defenseless group in our massive population—are to be sacrificed to provide business

opportunities for other much larger and far more forceful minorities under the Presidentially created Minority Business Concessions on Federal Locations Program.

"Although we are assured that this new federal program will not and is not intended to compete with the federal vending stand program for the blind, such assurances ignore the realistic probabilities.

"So long as the Randolph-Sheppard Act authorizes the manager of a federal building to determine which items may be sold in a blind-operated vending stand, there will be the hazard that items will be deliberately prohibited from sale on a vending stand so as to establish a need for installation of a minority business concession on such premises carrying the prohibited items.

"Or a vending stand may be established in a federal building already occupied by a minority business concession, and the vending stand will not be allowed to handle articles being dispensed by the minority business concession.

"Or a minority business concession may be allowed merchandise products being sold by a vending stand.

"Then, too, Mr. Chairman, when a blind-run vending stand and a minority-run business concession are competing for very limited space in a federal building—with space enough for only a blind vending stand or a minority business concession—there is no least doubt in our mind that the Presidential endorsement supporting the Minority

Business Concessions Program will result in the vending stand--and the blind--losing out every time.

"Mr. Chairman, the National Federation of the Blind does not oppose, but highly commends the move to give racial minorities the opportunities to become independent businessmen as the blind have been given this opportunity under the Randolph-Sheppard Act.

"However, Mr. Chairman, the National Federation of the Blind is greatly concerned that the Minority Business Concessions Program will curtail or destroy the preference granted by the Randolph-Sheppard Act for the location and operation of blind-managed merchandising businesses on federal property.

"Therefore, the National Federation of the Blind asks that the report which accompanies your action on S. 2506 state in unequivocal and emphatic language that the term "preference" in the Randolph-Sheppard Act means that it is the intent of Congress that first and always first consideration must be given to a blind-operated vending stand business to be located on federal property in items to be sold on such federal property and in the allocation of space for the operation of a business on federal property."

Traditionally, the public thinks of minorities in terms of ethnic and racial backgrounds but where jobs are concerned, the plight of the blind is far worse. As a result of economic discrimination the unemployment rate is about 90 per cent among the blind. Following are the facts concerning this very real threat to the vending stand

program and the blind operators who earn their livelihood under its aegis, as released by those in charge of the new program.

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MINORITY BUSINESS CONCESSIONS PROGRAM FACT SHEET

1. What is the Minority Business Concessions Program?

The Minority Business Concessions Program has been initiated to expand the number of minority group members operating private concessions in Federal buildings throughout the nation. The aim of the program is to create opportunities for the development of new entrepreneurs and to increase the viability of existing businesses.

2. Who is responsible for implementing the Program?

A National Task Force on Minority Business Concessions has been established to carry out the program. The membership of the Task Force is comprised of high-level officials of Federal agencies with real property management responsibility. The Commissioner of Public Buildings Service, General Services Administration, is Chairman of the Task Force. Member agencies are: General Services Administration (GSA); the Department of Agriculture, Defense (DOD), Health, Education and Welfare (HEW), Interior, Justice, Transportation (DOT), and Treasury; Atomic Energy Commission (AEC), National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), Smithsonian Institution, and the U. S. Postal Service. The Office of Minority Business Enterprise

(OMBE) and the Small Business Administration (SBA) are also members of the Task Force, since they spearhead the Government's overall effort in minority business development.

3. What have been the results of Task Force efforts to date?

On a pilot basis, OMBE was instrumental in establishing two concessions owned and operated by minority entrepreneurs in the Pentagon Concourse. GSA has established a gift and notions shop in a leased building in Huntsville, Alabama, and a florist shop and travel agency in a Federal building in San Francisco. Task Force members have identified more than 100 sites nationwide which may be suitable for the placement of business concessions and have distributed this listing to OMBE and SBA so that prospective minority entrepreneurs can be located and matched with appropriate concession opportunities.

4. How does a minority businessman apply for a concession?

Under the provisions of Section 8(a) of the Small Business Act, minority entrepreneurs can be selected noncompetitively to establish and operate these concessions. A prospective concessionaire must submit a "Business Qualifications Resume" which will be used to evaluate his financial and managerial capabilities as well as his eligibility under the 8(a) program. After a prospective concessionaire has been approved by the interested property holding agency and SBA, he will be matched with an appropriate concession site in his area.

5. What assistance will the

concessionaire receive?

Managerial and technical assistance of all types and at all stages—preparation of the "Business Qualifications Resume," arranging for financing, marketing expertise, bookkeeping help—will be available to minority entrepreneurs from SBA, OMBE, and the property holding agencies as requested.

6. What will be the responsibilities of the Task Force members in setting up the concessions?

The property holding agencies of the Task Force will provide suitable space for the concession and will bear the cost of bringing the selected area up to the standard of general purpose space in the building. The agency will also provide heating and ventilation, adequate entry and exit, and reasonable use of freight elevators, driveways, and loading platforms.

7. What will be the responsibilities of the concessionaire?

The concessionaire will provide for all space preparations and equipment such as fixtures, display cases, shelving, etc., which are necessary for the installation and operation of the concession.

8. How much rent will the concessionaire have to pay?

In lieu of rent and other charges, the concessionaire will pay to the Government one and one-half per cent (1½%) of his monthly gross operating revenue.

Attachment A to this fact sheet is a list of the suggested types of concessions to be

operated in Federal buildings.

ATTACHMENT A
SUGGESTED TYPES OF
BUSINESS CONCESSIONS

Auto Accessories Store
Bakery
Barber Shop
Beauty Shop
Book Store
Camera Shop
Card & Stationery Store
Children's Clothing Store
Delicatessen
Drapery & Upholstery Store
Dry Cleaning and Laundry
Fabric Store
Film Processing Drop & Pickup
Florist Shop
Garden Supply Store
Gift Shop
Gourmet Food & Kitchenware Shop
Hardware Store
Hobby Shop
Jewelry and Watch Store
(repair and sales)
Lamp and Shade Store
Leather Goods Store
(luggage, wallets, etc.)
Lock and Key Shop
Machine Rental Store
(waxers, polishers, etc.)
Men's Clothing Store
Men's Tie and Accessories Shop
Optics Shop
Party Supply Rental
Pet Supply Store
Photographer's Studio
Picture Frame and Framing Shop
Prescription Processing Stand
Records and Stereo Shop
Shoe Repair and Shoe Shine Stand

Shoe Store
Small Appliances Store
(repair and sales)
Tailoring Shop
Ticket Agency
(travel, entertainment, etc.)
Tobacco Shop
Toy Store
Typewriter Store
(sales, repairs, rental)
Variety Store
Women's Clothing Store

OREGON CONVENTION
by
Myrna Dawe

Earliest arrivals to the Oregon convention of the Federation of the Blind were greeted on Friday evening, March 17, at a hospitality hour hosted by Dick Kaufman, president of our Portland Chapter. Among those to arrive on Friday evening were Lawrence (Muzzy) Marcelino, Secretary of the National Federation, Ken Hopkins, National Federation board member and director of the Idaho Commission for the Blind, and others from nearby States.

After invocation by a guest minister on Saturday morning, Sister Joyce Marie Green, our mistress of ceremonies, introduced special guests to the members present. Muzzy Marcelino welcomed those attending the convention and detailed some of the more recent instances in which the National Federation of the Blind has proved helpful in preventing discrimination against blind individuals in employment situations.

Doug Kinney, coordinator of the

rehabilitation services now located in Salem, spoke of the progress made since the inception of the services and the plans being discussed for the future. Following his address, a resolution was adopted opposing the consolidation of services to the blind with those available to mental patients in the same center.

Ray Meyer, a representative of the State Board of Education, outlined a report from the Teachers' Research Bureau and spoke of services to blind children in Oregon, now offered at a School for the Blind in Salem and in residential schools and of plans being discussed to locate a school for the blind on the grounds of a school for the deaf in an effort to lower the budget for services to children. A resolution was adopted urging officers and members to oppose such a consolidation as such a move would deter services to the blind children, who would be in a minority.

The morning's activities were brought to a successful end by the adoption of an amendment to the Constitution changing the name of our group to the National Federation of the Blind of Oregon, in keeping with the move in other states.

Following lunch, Robert Pogorelc, recently appointed director of the Oregon Commission for the Blind, sparked an enthusiastic round of applause when he addressed the group, for the first time, as the "National Federation of the Blind of Oregon." He spoke on the present status of the Commission, his opposition to an umbrella agency, and the plans he has for improving services. His talk was followed by a vivacious discussion which ended in the adoption of a resolution urging the governor of the state to appoint a five-man

board, a majority of them blind, including representation from the Federation.

Carl Jarvis, president of the Washington Federation affiliate, was welcomed and spoke briefly. He especially invited members to attend a state convention being held in Seattle on July 27, 28, and 29. He and Jeff Brown then joined Ken Hopkins in a panel discussion on membership.

In an election of officers for the coming two years, Jeff Brown was given a round vote of confidence and was elected unanimously as president. Other officers include Winona Parker, first vice-president; Glen Muilenberg, second vice-president; Sister Joyce M. Green, secretary; Gere Gilkison, treasurer; board members Mona Kroeger and Mike Burwell and Ed Hamer, who will serve the board for one year in the position vacated by Winona Parker's election to the first vice-presidency. Our Board includes representation from varying parts of the state and those with a variety of interests, but with one common aim, the betterment of the Federation, and members in Oregon look forward to working with them in the coming term.

The interlude between adjournment of the afternoon session and the banquet presented the opportunity to watch two interesting movies, *For the Record* and *The Blind Guys*, and to visit with friends not seen for a while. Jeff Brown welcomed guests at a banquet held in the ballroom. He then introduced officers and members from local affiliates.

Muzzy Marcelino was the keynote speaker at the banquet. Guests listened attentively as he outlined ways to improve local and state affiliates. Officers were

urged to provide the leadership necessary, and members were exhorted to follow that leadership and to participate fully in all activities while following closely all communication available from national and state levels.

Following an evening of hospitality, dancing, and congeniality, the heartier members of the Federation were conspicuous by their presence at Sunday morning's activities. Ken Hopkins led an interesting discussion of the National Convention being held in Chicago from July 2 until July 6, and much enthusiasm for attending the Convention was aroused.

Margaret Rader, an assistant at the Division for the Blind and Physically Handicapped at the State Library in Salem, explained the services available there and some of the problems associated with those services. A resolution was offered asking that the library, among other improvements be moved to a more convenient location in Portland. The resolution was set aside for further study.

After a brief address by Lyle Read, Chairman of the Oregon Lions Sight Foundation, during which he offered the assistance of the Lions in any of the activities of the group, our convention was adjourned by Jeff Brown.

Those of us who attended the convention left with a sense of accomplishment and looking forward with enthusiasm to activities to come. We'll see you at the National Convention.

FROM MATH TEACHER TO PRINCIPAL

by
Barbara Maziarz

[Reprinted by courtesy of the *San Gabriel Valley Tribune*, Covina, California.]

Bill Schmidt is a math teacher and the principal of an intermediate school in Temple City. He likes woodworking and overhauling the engine on his car. At one time, he even had dreams of being a shop teacher. . . .

"First of all, I am a person. Just one of my individual differences is that I am blind," he said candidly. Schmidt was born blind. So were his brother and sister. There were no traces of blindness in his parents' families and he calls it a genetic mutation. However, the family adjusted and said his parents gave no overprotection to the children. All grew up to be "reasonably independent." "As a kid, I rode bicycles and roller skated like everybody else," he said. "I just did them a little differently." For instance, the bicycles were ridden on a dead-end street out of traffic.

"It never bugged me," he said. "There aren't too many things I had to pass up." He said as children, he and his brother and sister were given responsibilities around the house such as cleaning and washing. "Both my mother and dad were of the mind we ought to learn to do things and be independent," he said. The housecleaning done by the children was a good job, he said. "When we cleaned house, we had to clean everything because we didn't know right where the dirt was," he said with a laugh.

In addition to his parents' influence,

Schmidt said he owes a lot to the education he received in the School for the Blind in Berkeley. "They taught us that you're here to get an education to get along in a world of sighted people," he explained.

After high school, Schmidt married Meta, who was working at the School for the Blind. He did not marry a blind girl as is the case many times when the handicapped gravitate toward each other. Realistically speaking, aside from the basis of love, he admitted he felt he would "live a more normal life if I married a sighted girl." For instance, his wife can assist him in the many hours of reading he must do and she can drive a car. "We're able to help each other," he said. They have two adopted children, Peggy, 11, and Mark 9.

In college, Schmidt gained another distinction. In his senior year at San Francisco State College, he was named outstanding athlete of the year for his ability in wrestling. In three years in the college he lost only two matches. He began wrestling in junior high school, and remembers losing every match for a year. But his coach encouraged him to keep trying. "I wasn't about to quit anyhow," he said, with a hint of what must be strong determination.

During college his first desire was to be a shop teacher, teaching woodworking, auto mechanics and the industrial arts. "I realized it was going to be darn tough to convince somebody a blind guy could be responsible for safety in a shop," he admitted.

Then he channeled his efforts toward becoming a classroom teacher. "I also realized that wasn't going to be that easy,"

he said. To give himself added protection against future barriers, in addition to training for public school teaching, Schmidt trained himself to teach the blind. But he still was intent upon teaching in public school to "the sighted kids."

One of his barriers was finding a student teaching position where he could make a contribution and get actual teacher training. He lived in Oakland then and found a teacher in a school near San Jose who was willing to give him a chance. He boarded the bus at 4 a.m. every day and returned home at 10:30 p.m. "Okay, so it wasn't the easy way, but it was worthwhile," he said.

Schmidt has taught 16 years in Temple City schools, primarily as a math teacher in seventh and eighth grades. Last August 1 he was appointed principal at Oak Avenue Intermediate School. He's a firm believer in optimism and determination, and feels like he can do just about whatever he wants. "I may not do things the same way as everybody else, but as long as I get the job done. . ." he said.

He said he gets upset by the idea of some handicapped persons who think somebody owes them something. "It's not so much what do you want somebody else to do for you, but what do you want to do for yourself," he said. "You earn what you get."

He also feels it is his responsibility to put others who don't understand blindness at ease. "I live with it and I know about it," he said.

He also cannot tolerate sympathy

and "the do-gooders who will do something thinking they'll help the poor blind person." "I just believe you kind of have to make your own way and can't expect people to be handing things out to you," he explained. "The biggest compliment someone can pay me is to say, gee, Bill, I forgot you were blind, and this happens to me every day at work."

He feels he has never missed what he can't see and says he is able to perceive life in his own way. He added there are "a lot of things in this world that aren't worth seeing." He feels so strongly that he hasn't missed much in life, the idea of "miracle eye surgery" to give him sight "just doesn't turn me on." "If somebody said you can get the operation tomorrow, there is no way I would leave my job to do it," he said. "Sometimes people are shocked at my indifference.

"Maybe some summer. . ."

He said there is only one thing he can't do that he really wants--drive a car. But he even did that once in high school when his buddy let him drive his car in a cemetery. Still, he spends much time working on cars and once taught an auto mechanics class in school. It is not hard to work on the car without sight, he said, since "by touch you can find out what's going on."

He laughed when he recalled an incident recently when he and a friend were working on the car and it got dark. The friend went through all the complications of getting out an extension cord and hooking up a light so he could continue working. "I told him, you have to go to an awful lot of trouble just to work on a car," he said with a laugh.

* * * * *

THE IMPORTANCE OF EMPLOYING BLIND TEACHERS IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

by

Ewald B. Nyquist

[Reprinted by courtesy of the *New Outlook for the Blind* and by permission of the author. Dr. Nyquist is the Commissioner of Education, New York State Education Department.]

Someone has remarked that if good classroom discipline depended upon the teacher's 20/20 vision, we would have remarkably effective education in this country. In that event, reputable ophthalmologists and optometrists could do for administrators what is now so difficult. They could furnish brief reports through which the most effective disciplinarians could be employed by the highest bidder. School systems with high salaries, new buildings, and geographic attractions would undoubtedly lure most of the candidates with 20/20 vision, while those further down on the scale might have to be content with slightly less orderly classrooms.

Anyone who has ever employed teachers has at some time wished that there were such simple ways of evaluating a candidate's ability to create a productive classroom atmosphere and to fulfill the objectives of our educational programs. Delineation of educational goals and of desired teacher competencies is difficult enough, but the decision regarding a candidate's ability to fit into that picture is even more difficult.

In this era of general teacher surplus and a crisis of confidence in the public schools, there are not only the traditional

problems of interviewing and selecting prospective teachers but also the challenge of recruiting imaginatively. The need for competent staff has led state and local school administrators to recruit from hitherto untapped groups in the population and to offer training which will increase or update teaching skills. While recruiting methods vary from state to state, the intent is the same—the attraction of qualified people into the schools. In 1967, for example, the New York State Education Department established a Teachers Reserve to recruit and to train or retrain prospective teachers interested in entering or re-entering the teaching profession. Several universities have designed refresher courses for mid-career women who had interrupted their teaching careers because of family responsibilities. Peace Corps returnees have also been assisted in securing placement by the Teachers Reserve office.

We are especially anxious to recruit teachers who can and want to teach in the inner cities and have created a New York State Urban Teachers Corps for that purpose. Similar efforts to attract candidates are being made by the state education agencies in Pennsylvania, Delaware, and New Jersey.

Of course, mid-career women and Peace Corps returnees are not the only groups in our population which offer teaching potential. Advantage should also be taken of the desire of qualified visually handicapped candidates to teach in our public schools. This includes those whose vision places them within the "legal" definition of blindness (20/200 or less in the better eye after correction). Although such a measurement is only of distance vision and not of the more important

ability to see at close range, it is the definition which is used to determine eligibility for certain benefits and, too often, ineligibility for certain activities.

It must be remembered, too, that it is the nature of visual loss, the age at which the visual loss occurred, and a constellation of personal characteristics that will determine the functional behavior of each visually handicapped person. Perhaps even more important are those clues which, in the evaluation of a candidate, indicate the extent to which the individual can anticipate classroom activities which require more vision than he possesses and the extent to which he can visualize alternative activities utilizing his own personal strengths.

Each administrator has to arrive at a thoughtful decision regarding any candidate's ability to succeed in a specific teaching assignment. Will a mid-career woman, a new graduate, an experienced teacher, a Peace Corps returnee, be able to carry out a teaching assignment? Will a visually handicapped person be able to fulfill the teaching assignment? No objective test can measure teaching competence. Whether we stop to think about it or not, the hiring of every teacher is very much an act of faith and hope: faith in one's own judgment and in the candidate's expressed desire to be a good teacher; hope that the decision was right and that the teacher will do good teaching and participate in making the climate of the school conducive to learning.

Some may say that too often the hiring of teachers is an act of desperation. In some specific subject matter areas, the teacher shortage may necessitate employment of candidates who are less

qualified. This inevitably leads to a cruelty that is not intended—that of allowing a teacher to assume a post in which there are high odds that he will fail. He goes into the assignment without our confidence and support, which is in itself a push toward failure. In the best interest of the school and certainly in the best interest of blind candidates who may be interviewed and employed, let us do the thinking and planning which will make an employment decision one of hope and faith—one in which the blind teacher has our confidence and support.

It must be kept in mind that blindness is neither a qualification nor a disqualification. In other words, blindness in itself does not predispose any person to unique teaching qualities, abilities, or talents, nor does it qualify him for a position just because we may have extreme feelings of pity or concern. Blindness, also, does not automatically qualify a teacher to teach blind children. On the other hand, blindness does not in itself automatically disqualify any person who has the requisite preparation and personal skills.

If decisions about employment of blind candidates are to be based upon their competencies, can it be assumed that teacher preparation programs are open to blind college students? While there is a history of reluctance to accept legally blind students into teacher preparation programs and those who were accepted were warned that the university placement bureau could not take responsibility for placement, there is a growing rate of acceptance. There are now more than 300 blind teachers employed in elementary and secondary schools in this country; during the 1968-69 academic year there

were more than 700 blind college students preparing for teaching careers in the public schools. It is, therefore, increasingly possible for blind students to acquire the academic qualifications that local schools and state certification agencies deem essential.

In 1967, the legislature of the State of New York amended the Education Law so that "no regulations established by the commissioner or by any school district . . . shall prohibit, prevent or disqualify any person who is otherwise qualified, from competing, participating and registering for examination nor from obtaining a teacher's certificate or from qualifying for a position as a teacher solely by reason of his or her blindness. . . ."

Because colleges have had difficulty in finding practice teaching placements for blind students, many otherwise qualified students fail to achieve certification. This situation, however, could be turned to great advantage, for it offers local schools that are near schools of education the opportunity to work with qualified blind teachers-in-training whose activities can be supervised by the university. The potential for a relatively stress-free experience for the blind practice teachers and for the students, supervisors, teachers, parents, and administrators could make this situation a prelude to a full-time association—a position in the local school for the blind teacher once he has achieved certification.

If blindness is neither a qualification nor a disqualification and if a candidate has academic qualifications as certified by his state education agency, what, then, are the personal competencies which are sought in such teachers? It is my

conviction that the same scale of measurement of personal skill and competency should be applied to all teacher-candidates, whether they be sighted or blind or otherwise handicapped. Each school system has its own criteria for selecting teachers but there are some general competencies upon which all could agree.

First, does the teacher have a sincere interest in enabling children to learn and to grow toward competent adulthood? This implies that good teachers are adults who, without sentimentality, want to engage in a career which stimulates children to learn and to understand and to do, who, in short, are interested in children—all children. Further, teachers should have the kind of maturity that permits them to measure their own achievement in terms of long-range goals and objectives rather than the specific successes or mistakes of individual children.

Second, does the teacher show promise of flexibility and creativity in using both new and traditional ideas, techniques, and materials in the classroom? A teacher must be able to evaluate a teaching or a learning problem and to draw upon a wide range of ideas that may offer a solution. Teachers must not be bound either to the "time-honored" or to the "brave-new." They must be seeking to resolve problems, not looking for ready-made answers. They must not, however, be afraid of innovation, which I define as a planned disruptive experience that makes a productive difference.

Third, is the teacher able to work with other teachers and staff in

constructive joint efforts to achieve the educational goals of the school?

Fourth, does the teacher have the professional confidence and personal security to enable him to meet with parents to interpret the program of his classroom?

It is clear, I think, that not one of these four points, points which are so basic in the consideration of teacher candidates, has anything to do with how much or how little an individual can see. If, then, blind students can go to the same teacher-preparation programs in the university as their sighted peers and achieve the same state certification, and if impaired vision has no effect upon the crucial personal characteristics sought in teachers, what other factors have, up to now, prevented the hiring of blind teachers?

The initial hurdle to be overcome is simply the feeling of uneasiness which sighted school personnel experience in the first interviews and in the first few weeks of school. This uneasiness is most often related to the understandable uncertainties of dealing with a blind person. Blind people have their own ways of relating to these problems and only time and frank discussion will erase the uncertainty of the first few contacts. In reality, the process of getting acquainted is pretty much the same for all of us.

As a part of his doctoral work, Edward Huntington, superintendent of schools in Canton, New York, investigated the problems that the administrators of schools believed would cause difficulty for blind teachers. Through interviews with personnel in schools in which blind

teachers were working, he was able to determine which problems had actually been encountered and the solutions that had been worked out. In very brief summary, it was found that, in most schools, lunchroom supervision was not assigned to the blind teacher but other appropriate duties were substituted. Student cheating on tests was not a problem. Blind teachers had no difficulty during fire drills or in chaperoning and advising student activities and clubs. Keeping written records did not prove to be a problem, there being a number of different methods devised by the blind teachers. Effective discipline, the area of greatest concern, proved to be directly related to the elusive quality of respect which the students accorded to the teacher. Blindness was not felt to be a factor in discipline and only five of the 32 teachers in this study were judged by their principals to have less than average discipline in their classrooms. Finally, many principals reported that after the first few weeks the students tended to forget about the teacher's lack of vision.

The New York State Federation of Workers for the Blind has gone on record with positive statements about two of the questions which school administrators may be reluctant to ask: is it necessary to give specific privileges to blind teachers that may not be enjoyed by other teachers?

A blind teacher will not expect, nor should he expect, any special consideration from his administrators. . . . A blind teacher, like his sighted colleagues, is expected to contribute, produce and compete. He is aware that he cannot expect to succeed in this profession unless he enters the job sufficiently equipped and

motivated to do so.

And, will the blind person be able to get around the building and school grounds?

Only those persons who have acquired a high level of personal adjustment should be considered for teaching assignments. Inasmuch as mobility is an essential aspect of personal adjustment for a blind person, all visually handicapped persons applying for teaching positions should be capable, independent travelers. . . . The blind teacher will orient himself to the building and grounds prior to assuming his classroom responsibilities. This means he will spend his own time learning routes to classrooms, the office, the gym, the cafeteria, the rest rooms, etc.

When blind students first knocked on the doors of teacher preparation programs in colleges and universities, it was mistakenly assumed that their intent was to teach only blind children, that blindness somehow qualified a person to teach others who are blind. The next step in our progress toward employment of blind teachers was a conviction that they would be successful only at the secondary level where students are more self-directed and where movement in the classroom is somewhat limited. Recently, the New York Association for the Blind compiled a list of teaching positions held by legally blind teachers in the public school systems in the United States in the 1968-69 academic year. This list is dramatic proof that another giant step has been taken in the march toward equality of opportunity. There are blind teachers in all grades, kindergarten through twelfth grade; there are administrators, curriculum coordinators, counselors. There are

mathematics, music, language, English, business, social studies, social science, and remedial reading teachers. There are ten science teachers, including two who teach chemistry and two who teach physics. The old fears of school administrators are apparently beginning to disappear. Blind teachers are asking for and receiving opportunities to teach in the areas of their greatest skills and interests.

It is, therefore, clear that our focus must be on the characteristics of good teaching and of good teachers, not on whether a person is sighted or blind. Good teaching by competent, informed, and enthusiastic teachers is the key to effective education. For while it takes many things to provide quality in education, the teacher is well ahead of whatever is in second place.

And what is good teaching? If education is the fulfillment of ourselves, then good teaching is that instruction which relentlessly demands the utmost of each student according to his abilities. As Emerson said, "What all of us need is someone to make us do what we are capable of doing." To lead a student with delight to understand that he is a human being worthy of study and celebration; to liberate closed minds from preconceptions, inhibitions, and timidities; teaching that reminds us that man was made a little lower than the angels; teaching that enables each young person to answer these questions: Who am I? Where have I come from? What is the meaning of life? What can I do to become and remain an effective, responsible member of society? To create in each child a positive self-image and the capacity for self-criticism--these are the goals of competent teaching.

A CALL FOR UNITY
by
Shirley Lebowitz

There is a need for unity among the blind citizens of Connecticut. The following letters will point that out and also emphasize the necessity for passage of the Model White Cane Law in the Nutmeg State.

February 24, 1972

Mr. William Patton, Director
Board of Education and
Services for the Blind
170 Ridge Road
Wethersfield, Connecticut 06109

Dear Mr. Patton:

It has come to our attention that there is a position in your agency, as rehabilitation counselor, about to be filled. The tests for said position are to be given on Saturday, February 26, 1972, by the Personnel Division of the State of Connecticut. This position falls within the provisions of the Civil Service Merit System.

We know that there are five applicants for the position who are blind, and several sighted applicants. All the blind applicants were rejected before the tests were to be given, and they were not permitted to take the test. Only sighted applicants will take the test next Saturday.

All five blind applicants hold Masters Degrees, and all but one have several years of experience either teaching in schools or welfare counseling experience. Moreover,

it comes to our attention that a certain young man was promised this position as long as September, 1971, by the man in your agency responsible for hiring and filling that position. If such is true, the Merit System is pretense and a fraud; the testing procedure is sham and a waste of taxpayers' money.

There may have been collusion between the Board of Education and Services for the Blind and the Division of Personnel Services, whereby all blind candidates were rejected before the tests were given. There is some evidence in this direction.

The National Federation of the Blind of Connecticut and your agency are concerned for the blind of this state: specifically, that the blind shall have equal opportunities to secure jobs and positions commensurate with their training and abilities. Obviously, where skills and training are equal with sighted candidates, preference should be given the blind. Your agency should be pressing this point with all departments of state government. We ask for equal treatment, not favors. As I have investigated the qualifications of the blind applicants for this position, it seems incredible that they were all denied the right to take the tests for the position on the grounds that they lacked experience.

Therefore, we request that you, with Mr. Simpson, Commissioner of the Personnel Division, suspend the tests for February 26th, until you can make a thorough investigation to ascertain that the refusal to permit any of the blind applicants to take the test was proper within the principles of the Merit System and were in fact adhered to.

Further, we would ask for an explanation as to why none of the blind applicants were qualified to take those tests. This situation is too urgent to wait for our meeting in April. I trust you will give this your immediate attention.

Howard E. May, Jr.
President
NFB of Connecticut, Inc.

February 24, 1972

Dr. Edward Simpson, Commissioner
Division of Personnel Service
State of Connecticut
Hartford, Connecticut

Dear Dr. Simpson:

I enclose a copy of a letter to Mr. William Patton, Director, Board of Education and Services for the Blind, dealing with selection of a candidate for a position as rehabilitation counselor in that agency.

We are very concerned about the situation that appears to be either discrimination against blind applicants, or a breakdown of the Merit System of selection of applicants to take the qualifying tests. It is strange that none of the five blind applicants could qualify to take the tests for the position.

We wish to know the basis for disqualification of the blind applicants, and who makes such a decision.

We request that you and Mr. Patton investigate the situation to ascertain that proper procedures were followed in both

agencies, and that the blind applicants were not disqualified because of their blindness.

The National Federation of the Blind of Connecticut will await your explanation.

Howard E. May, Jr.
President
NFB of Connecticut, Inc.

By the time you read this article the, winter snows will have melted and the Connecticut countryside will once again be green. Ice skates and skis will have been stored away and sportscasters will be reporting baseball scores and batting averages.

The above letters may or may not have been answered. (At the time of this writing they had not been.) The requested investigations may or may not have taken place. The Board of Education and Services for the Blind may or may not have a new rehabilitation counselor.

There is no doubt that Reverend Howard E. May, Jr., president of the National Federation of the Blind of Connecticut, since his election to that office a few months ago, has clearly demonstrated that he is a capable and highly qualified leader. He deserves the support and assistance of the entire blind community of this State.

The National Federation of the Blind of Connecticut is an action organization. We have pledged to give top priority to our efforts in seeking enactment of civil rights legislation for the blind.

We must not be silent and obscure. There is no security in obscurity. It is time now for the blind of Connecticut to unite and step forward. We must speak out and speak up with one voice—a voice loud enough, strong enough and clear enough to be heard in the General Assembly, the office of Governor Meskill, the Board of Education and Services for the Blind and all over the State of Connecticut.

THE BABY IS THE ONLY ONE WHO CAN SEE

by
Phyllis Wright

[Reprinted by courtesy of the St. Joseph (Missouri) *News-Press*.]

The Thomas A. Davis household is more or less typical of any young American couple with a two-year-old child. There are toys here and there. Pictures and drapes have been chosen and hung with care. Books line the shelves along the wall and the kitchen is neat and well-equipped. The only difference is that Tom Davis and his wife, Joan, are blind.

Their metal-tipped white canes, so vital to the independence of a sightless person, stand in a corner of the living room. All the reading material is Braille. There is a "talking book" machine on loan from the library. But Tom and Joan manage their lives with all the confidence of the sighted. They are well trained and capable of coping with their handicap. They admit to limitations but do not feel that their life is narrow or depressing, and they deplore the attitudes of those who look on in pity or are over-anxious to "help."

Both Tom and Joan are natives of Iowa which is perhaps the most advanced of all states in the treatment of the blind. Sightless since birth, Tom attended the Iowa Braille and Sightsaving School at Vinton and later the Iowa Commission for the Blind in Des Moines. He took special training in St. Paul, Minnesota, to prepare for his vocation as masseur at the St. Joseph Y.M.C.A.

His wife was born with a hereditary disease that meant eventual blindness. She was able to attend normal schools but by the time she reached young womanhood she could distinguish only light and dark. She thus began to study blind techniques and Braille at the Des Moines center and learned to be a switchboard operator and vending machine hostess. This was where the couple met. They were married in 1968.

The job opportunity in St. Joseph came in October, 1970. Tom arrived here ahead of his wife to rent a home and get his bearings. A blind person alone in a strange city sounds like "mission impossible" to the sighted person. But Thomas Davis was up to the challenge. "The Y.M.C.A. and Sammy's Drug Store were my bases and from there I learned the pattern of the downtown streets," he stated matter of factly. "By asking a few simple questions, I was soon able to find my way to stores, banks and eating places." Busy intersections were no problem. He and his wife went everywhere in Des Moines.

Tom rented a duplex on a bus line and a relative helped him move his family and belongings. This was about all the assistance that was needed. With remarkable self-sufficiency, the Davises

learned the layout of the rooms and the locations of electrical outlets and other features. "We didn't need anyone to show us," Joan explained. "We rely on logic and touch. We discover and we remember. In a day or two we felt at home." Organization is the key word in the life of a blind person. Everything must have its place and be kept in order.

Even little Tommy has learned this rule so well that he needn't be prodded to put things away. He is permitted to strew his toys about the house throughout the day but at bedtime and naptime he automatically places them and his clothes in their proper places.

Joan excused herself from the interview long enough to make coffee and serve it to her guests. She was asked if spills were a problem. "No more for us than for anyone," she replied. "They just have to be cleaned up." How does she manage her housework? "I clean the floors on my hands and knees," Joan answered. "This way I feel with one hand and scrub with the other and know when things are clean." The same technique applies to other surfaces in the home. Her tidy kitchen cabinets, stove and refrigerator testify to her competence.

The grocery shopping is usually Tom's job. He has familiarized himself with a particular store and needs only occasional help to locate an item. Sensitive fingers can detect raised numbers on the bottom of canned goods that are a clue to their contents. Even tomato soup and chicken soup are different. Shopping for clothing and other items requires some cooperation from clerks, but Tom and Joan know what they want and how to ask for it.

Joan has a Braille cookbook but also likes to experiment with cooking. The controls on her oven and on other appliances such as the washer and dryer are notched for her convenience.

The rearing of their child is a source of pride to the Davises. Except for his first few days home from the hospital they have been completely on their own in caring for him. Both became adept at bathing, changing and feeding him as a baby. When he became an active toddler they were extra careful about objects that can be dangerous to a small youngster.

Discipline is most important. With Tommy, his parents must be assured that he obeys, or the results could be serious. And he does. He follows all orders and directions explicitly. He is showered with affection and attention, and giggles mirthfully in a rough-house session with his dad. Like all youngsters he brings his father his broken toys to fix and Tom handily replaced a wheel on a plastic lawn mower.

Since Tommy can see, he seems already to sense the handicap of his parents and has learned to be quite helpful to them. But Tommy is afflicted with the same disease that caused his mother's blindness. There is some hope that advanced medical techniques may slow down his visual regression, but if he does become blind, his parents do not consider it a tragedy. They feel they are equipped to prepare him for a full and useful life.

The Davises have many interests. They love to read and subscribe to many Braille periodicals. They have a set of encyclopedias, the Bible and other books in Braille. They also take full advantage of

library services for the blind and have an audio-reader hookup with Kansas University. Tom plays the piano with enthusiasm, mostly by ear, but he can read music and has a pleasant singing voice. He has composed 30 or 40 songs, none of which he "has done anything with." Both are good typists.

"We love to go to movies, watch TV, swim, fish and go camping," Tom answered when asked what they do for recreation. "We get much more out of movies and television than a seeing person can possibly imagine. In Des Moines we bowled quite a lot because there were lanes equipped with special guide rails for the blind. My scores were improving all the time."

The daily mail constitutes a problem for blind people so the Davises hire a woman to come in once a week and help them sort it out and send out monthly payments. Joan can tell by the feel of an envelope, however, who has sent the statement. The helper also makes out checks for them because it is quicker and easier, but they can do it if the need arises, simply by using thumb measurements to place the entries and signature.

"Our biggest concern is for other blind people who have not had the opportunity to become self-sufficient," Tom said, with Joan echoing his sentiments. "That is why we organized a St. Joseph chapter of the National Federation of the Blind. Joan is president and I am secretary. The meetings are held in our home. The group is small but we're getting things accomplished as we pass on to them the skills and techniques we have learned."

The white cane is a magic tool in the hands of a well-trained blind person. Tom points out that its advantages far outweigh the services of a seeing-eye dog or a sighted companion because it puts the blind person completely on his own, and this is a good feeling.

The philosophy the Davises have formed in regard to their handicap is expressed very well by Tom in a letter he circulated while organizing the federation chapter. In it he wrote:

"Blindness is not the end of the world. Blind persons are persons who need to help themselves . . . Our aim is to pave the way for sighted people and blind people alike for a better understanding of blindness and what blind people can do." He and Joan emerge as shining examples.

* * * * *

'GET A TIN CUP'

by

Shirley Marino

(Reprinted by courtesy of the *Pennsville Progress*, Pennsville, New Jersey and by the author. A postscript to this story might be of interest. Miss Haynes has since been hired as a teacher at the newly-formed Nazarene Day Care Center.)

Editor, Pennsville Progress

Dear Sir:

We are always hearing about discrimination against people because of their color, sex, or national origin, but there is never much said about discrimination against the handicapped.

From time to time within the past

four years you all may remember reading in the paper about a young woman from our community, Marie Haynes. She is blind. There have been articles written telling about when she entered college, when she underwent an operation to have her eyes removed, and some of her accomplishments such as receiving the Medallion award for Courage in Adversity, when she graduated from Glassboro State College, and just recently being nominated for Woman of the Year. Everyone is always giving Marie a pat on the back and telling her what a wonder she is, but unfortunately that doesn't pay the rent or enable her to be self-supporting which is just what Marie wants to be.

Marie graduated from Glassboro State College this past summer with a B.A. in elementary education. In her last semester she made the Dean's list. Since graduation she has applied to schools in this vicinity and any place she thought she might have a chance of getting a job as an elementary teacher including North Carolina and Florida. They were all very impressed with her record and were interested in Marie until she went for an interview and told them she was blind. Then, for some reason "they were not hiring anyone at that time." In her interview at the Pedricktown school she was given the excuse that there were "too many steps to climb."

While attending Maryland School for the Blind, she was required in her junior and senior year to walk one mile to catch a public service bus to Baltimore. After a one hour ride the bus left her off in front of Memorial Stadium. She then had to cross the street to Eastern High School which is a public all-girl school consisting of four floors. She graduated in a class of

804 girls. Then at the end of the school day repeated the same procedure.

No matter what the weather conditions she did this five days a week for two years, and the only companion she had was another blind student. What was that again: too many steps?

Marie did her student teaching at one of the Pennsville elementary schools for two years. She did very well and was given very high recommendations from both the principal of that school and the teachers she taught under. Even though she applied to many schools her real wish was to teach in one of the Pennsville elementary schools. But she didn't apply because unlike the other schools, Mr. Welliver didn't bother to give any excuse. He just refused to even give her an application because there weren't any openings for elementary teachers. If that was so, why was there a new fifth grade teacher hired for Penn Beach school? Was it out of the kindness of your heart, Mr. Welliver, that you refused to give her an application knowing all along that you had no intentions of hiring her and didn't want that blind girl to waste her time?

Marie's name was never mentioned at any of the school board meetings, but when it finally was, not one member thought she was capable. Nothing was ever mentioned about her teaching abilities only that to their estimation she could not discipline the children or conduct fire drills. It was also said that she had never been left alone with the class while student teaching.

If the school board had cared enough to check, all their assumptions would have been proven wrong. During the time Marie

student taught she was left alone many times with the class; she conducted fire drills and was also responsible for the children on the playground. She took them for walks and even acted as a substitute in the absence of the teacher for an entire day.

If Marie's record or the recommendations of the people she worked under were not enough to prove her capability, why not ask the parents of Marie's students their opinion or even the children themselves? One student accused Marie of not really being blind after she singled him out of the class several times for misbehaving. Another child asked her if she could drive "because she could do everything else." But then children don't know anything, do they?

Unfortunately, the ones to pass final judgment are a group of narrow-minded people we refer to as the school board. The people of Pennsville have and will lose the chance of having many a fine teacher if we continue electing people with such prejudices to the school board.

We are all judged on our record and our own merit. When we elect anyone to public office, we really haven't any idea what type of person we are voting for. The only thing we have to go by is what we read in the papers and what they tell us about themselves.

In the case of Marie, she has proven herself many times. But, when it is all said and done, she is blind and nothing else matters.

So Marie, I say to you, give up. Stop trying to change the image that we all have of the blind. The blind have always been

helpless and always will be. Just get yourself a pair of dark glasses, a cane, and a tin cup.

Mother of two,
Mrs. Shirley S. Marino

* * * * *

A RARE OPPORTUNITY

by

Kelly Smith

[Editor's Note: The following letter, addressed to *Monitor* Readers, is from Kelly Smith, President of the National Federation of the Blind of Alaska, and would seem to constitute a rare opportunity for some fortunate blind person.]

Dear *Monitor* Readers:

In the spring of 1973 I have every intention of retiring. I will be interested in starting to communicate with people who will be interested in taking over my businesses. One is a steambath and massage, called Kelly's Massage Therapy, and the other a wholesale business called Kelly's Nu-Age Products wherein I wholesale brooms, brushes and mops. These two businesses are conducted from my home which is also the headquarters of The National Federation of the Blind of Alaska. The applicant should be a Federationist and have leadership ability. I will require that the man be no younger than forty and no older than fifty years of age. All communications with me should be conducted by three inch open reel tapes at the speed of three and three quarters, the first tape to be accompanied by pictures of the man and his wife. When a choice has been made that is mutually

satisfactory, we can make a date for your arrival, which will be made possible by my furnishing you with your fare to Anchorage, Alaska. I prefer that the man have no training whatsoever and his wife only a general knowledge of office work. My wife and I wish to train each in our own exact systems.

Both the man and his wife will live here with us for several months until you can step into your jobs with confidence. Terms will be discussed as we start to correspond. I must naturally be very sure of the people engaged and will eventually require references and I will expect that you will require references from me. I believe that your remuneration will be fair and adequate since my wife and I expect to be gone a long time. Please understand that some of my questions will be detailed.

Both my wife and I will be at the National Convention of the NFB in Chicago this summer and anyone wishing to discuss this proposal with us can contact us there, or write to P. O. Box 1516, Anchorage, Alaska 99501.

* * * * *

RECIPE OF THE MONTH

by

Georgina Silva

[Georgina Silva is an active and long-time member of the NFB of California and serves as secretary to the Alameda County Club of the Adult Blind--the local affiliate.]

ENCHILADA CASSEROLE

1 8 oz can tomato sauce

- 1 10 oz can Enchilada sauce
- 1 10 oz can water
- 1 lb ground beef
- 1 large onion chopped
- 2 cloves garlic chopped
- 1 hard cooked egg chopped
- 1 4½ oz can chopped olives
- ½ tsp salt
- 6 tortillas
- ½ lb Monterey Jack cheese grated

Heat Enchilada sauce, tomato sauce and water. Brown meat with garlic and onion. Add egg and olives. Add salt and ½ cup of sauce. In a casserole, layer tortillas (dipped first in sauce), meat mixture, and cheese. Pour over remaining sauce. Top with cheese. Bake in 350 degree oven for 25 minutes. Serves 6.

* * * * *

PSEUDOSCIENCE AND REHABILITATION: THE NEW TECHNOCRATS

by

Manuel Urena

For more than a quarter century the National Federation of the Blind has played an instrumental role in the development of programs for the more than four hundred to five hundred thousand sightless citizens residing in the country. Throughout the years the Federation has served as the official forum of the blind speaking for themselves. By executive actions; convention resolutions; committee reports; membership debates; government and private personnel appearing before conventions; addresses, panels, and speakers at national meetings; and through various publications; the organized blind have developed a doctrine which embraces the manifold aspects of blindness. In essence this doctrine asserts

that the blind, as an identifiable segment of the population, are mentally competent, psychologically stable, and socially adaptable and that their needs are therefore those of ordinary individuals, of normal people caught at a physical and social disadvantage. What the blind must have if they are to be contributing members of society is liberation into public activity rather than isolation from it, integration not separation, acceptance not rejection, exposure not confinement, and most important of all the inalienable freedom of mobility—the right to be abroad everywhere in the land.

Specifically addressing agency personnel and professionals in the field, it is of paramount importance that they come to recognize that the proposition embodying the normality of the sightless implies that the blind, like other persons, have a need for shelter but not to be sheltered, a need for adjustment and counseling but not custodialization or patronage. Especially this thesis affirms the capacity of the visually handicapped for self-reliance and self-determination—for full participation in the affairs of man and active competition in the regular market place. Lamentably, this directive to people in work for the blind must be emphasized because the record incontrovertibly makes clear that many of the worthwhile advances won by the visually impaired were realized not with the cooperation and free association, but with strong resistance and at times outright hostility from a significant number of persons charged with the task of improving conditions for the blind.

Looking into the situation today, criticism of work for the blind initially appears to be an exercise best

characterized by ingratitude. This paradox is further accentuated since, in terms of government expenditures; educational research; training facilities; professionals concentrating on problems of the handicapped; and the broadcasting of information about the disabled, and the sightless in particular; there is more activity today than heretofore. However, penetrating scrutiny reveals that such a conclusion is superficial. More than ever, the field of work for the blind is in disarray, and disagreement between the blind and those responsible for administering service programs in their behalf is widespread. The discord reaches across the entire spectrum of rehabilitation and education. Therefore, identification of the more serious problem areas is timely and useful.

If experience has taught us anything, it is that constructive reforms do not materialize quickly. As in the past, we recognize that in order to gain acceptance, new proposals must be allotted time for explanations, discussions, removal of obstacles, and generally for the dissemination of new ideas.

The concept of rehabilitation—which for these purposes may be briefly defined as the process of restoring the productive capacity of the disabled—originated approximately a century ago with the creation of special employment bureaus for the handicapped. Not surprisingly, these bureaus soon foundered because of the dearth of suitable training facilities. More significantly, the bureaus failed because they did not plan adequate measures to combat the all-pervasive stubborn resistance of employers and the general public who would not utilize the talents of the physically impaired. The

modern philosophy of vocational rehabilitation as expressed in the combined Federal-State program is the product of a marked evolution in social thought and community responsibility. The course of its history manifests, for the most part, a praiseworthy human concern. But, as in the evolution of organic life, the record reveals extraneous atavisms and morbid mutations that have tended to delay and permanently arrest maturity.

Opinions concerning the rehabilitation program in practice, as distinguished from theory, range from wholesale endorsement to total rejection. One authority describes the “art of rehabilitation” as having “emerged from a nebulous status identified with phrenology, clairvoyance, and fortune telling into a well-integrated system of techniques designed to help a man find the calling in life that promises him the greatest personal satisfaction and the maximum use of his talents.” Without disparaging the tangible advances registered, it is a fair question whether the present rehabilitation system, with its accompanying techniques, has reached the sophistication mentioned in this evaluation. Even if the total methodology were completely validated and perfectly integrated (neither condition prevails today), the fact would remain that not a single state program of rehabilitation functions with maximum efficiency. The major pitfalls in rehabilitation stem from flaws in the theory as well as from poorly-trained and wrongly-motivated personnel whose relationships with their clients have been less sympathetic than bureaucratic. Their advice has been dictated by traditional shopworn attitudes concerning the physical restrictions imposed upon handicapped workers.

Recently there has developed a stampede or mania (those are the only words that accurately describe the effort) to scientifically classify every phase of the rehabilitative process. The preoccupation to create a "science of rehabilitation" for the training of counselors has opened a Pandora's Box that represents a clear and present danger. In a similar fashion, the stress placed upon "objective tests," the urge to standardize pressures workers into losing sight of the essentially individualized nature of the rehabilitative procedure. To extricate intuition altogether from rehabilitation and to replace it with questionable incompletely-tested schemes poses the greatest peril of our day. Without any necessity for apology, it may be argued that intuition, in the sense of insight, is an indispensable tool of the counselor's equipment. The obsession with codifying and classifying only reflects the natural bias of the social worker against all that is "intuitive" in favor of all that is "scientific."

In all likelihood, this reason best explains why state rehabilitation services are least effective in training and placing the blind competitively. Many counselors, because they fail to assess the severity of the social handicap, often display a lack of confidence in the physical and vocational ability of their visually impaired clients. Thus, they tend to reinforce defeatism by confining vocational goals to stereotyped channels. It would be necessary to go to great lengths to exaggerate the enormous waste of resources and futility of energy expended that is attributable to the reluctance of rehabilitation workers to abandon traditional paths of training and placement, rather than branching out in new directions. There is always room for

improvement in the philosophy and actual program of rehabilitation. Still, it is a certainty that a positive resolution to the present peril, for the blind at least, lies more in the direction of increased participation by successful blind men and women in policy-determination roles at the critical decision-making level than in a fixation upon a pseudoscience method.

To better grasp the full implications of the headlong drive to establish the "science of rehabilitation" it will be instructive to look at the issue in a broader context so that its roots may be traced to the soil from which it gathers its strength and nourishment. Progress teaches forcefully that the dogmatisms and superstitions of each epoch wear out and fall into disfavor. Statements that were once regarded as absolute truth grow thin, develop gaps, and are soon discarded. The heterodoxy of one age is the orthodoxy of the next generation. If there is a lesson that is constant and appears permanent, it would be that the ultimate critique of pure reason is that its results do not endure.

In 1832 Alexis de Tocqueville observed, "The nations seem to be advancing toward unity. Our means of intellectual intercourse unite the most remote parts of the earth and it is impossible for men to remain strangers to each other or to be ignorant of the events which are taking place in any corner of the globe." Perceiving the possibility of world community, de Tocqueville took it as a probability. He assumed that with increased knowledge, human beings would act rationally. It was natural to surmise that the great enemies of mankind, ignorance and isolation, had been banished. This new knowledge and

communication could only lead to the removal of ancient enmities. But as everyone knows today, this erudite scholar fell prey to a common error. Knowledge is neutral.

Acquisition of new facts may be either employed to produce flourishing harmony and wholesome prosperity or exploited to bring about a reign of terror and a state of utter wretchedness. de Tocqueville completely failed to take account of the human capacity for contact without communication, or knowledge without comprehension. As the sad history of the last 150 years amply demonstrates, far from leading to a community of brotherhood, the economic, technical, and scientific shrinkage of the world has in fact greatly aggravated and heightened the danger from national antagonisms. To an incredible degree, a similar fate has afflicted work for the blind. The human phenomena of contact without communication or knowledge without comprehension is standard operating procedure in work for the blind. Although contacts between the blind and professionals administering services for the sightless have steadily multiplied during the last 150 years, and in spite of the fact that valuable information regarding the effects brought on by the loss of vision is abundant, yet too many agency officials display a total lack of understanding about the significant needs of the clients they serve. Again while in ever-increasing numbers visually impaired men and women are entering new vocations and scaling the walls of prejudice and resistance, professionals in work for the blind to an unconscionable extent continue to pursue irrelevant goals and to operate anachronistic programs.

With the cessation of hostilities after World War II came a partial disclosure of many scientific and technological strides registered during the conflict. Everyone regarded the men who had played a vital part in bringing about these remarkable feats as supreme. Naturally, almost the entire citizenry looked to them to resolve all of the post-war problems: unemployment, demobilization, and of particular interest here, rehabilitation. These men whose skills lay in the handling of abstract ideas were precipitately catapulted to the very heart of human affairs. The scientists seemed to assume, whether they wished it or not, aspects of omnipotent creation. In the public mind these men were thought of as unworldly or superhuman.

The widely held misconception among laymen was that scientists were infallible. In the realm of science there existed only truths that, once discovered, were immutable and beyond dispute. The public was conditioned to believe that scientists made no mistakes nor did they reveal what was only partly factual. Scientists simply learned truths.

The traits of human error and fallibility were not possessed by men of science. As repositories of wisdom, scientists had transformed the earth. Their views reigned supreme. In effect, scientists were expected to transfer their mastery (often against their own better judgment) to the analysis of entirely separate issues of human concern. As events so frequently happen there soon came a cry to systemize the humbler activities of man until the trend had permeated the entire social fabric. "After all," reasoned many would-be educators, "if it requires the name of science to receive grants, glory,

and acclaim, why not create new sciences to embrace all human affairs?"

Initially the authority of science in the nonscientific sphere was not seriously challenged. Even today it is almost impossible to cut through the minutia of irrelevant research and special studies to intelligently approach pressing problems with reasonable solutions. To put the matter succinctly, the present attempts to place all human affairs beneath a mantle of "science" is nothing more than a revival, in a different dress to be sure, of the familiar and previously discredited technocrat dogma.

Nearly 100 years ago when technocracy was in vogue, its devotees stoutly maintained that all problems are basically technical—capable of exact analysis and correct final solution. According to this view, human emotions are hardly relevant. In fact, individual behavior becomes an irritating uncharted distraction, for it unavoidably injects a vexing and nonscientific element of chance and unpredictability. To be sure, the public is at last awakening to the difficulty and is becoming increasingly alarmed about the resurrection of this nemesis.

The fallibility, and at times, the innocence in human affairs exhibited by scientists is often astounding. Now we hear in a growing clamor voices from the loosely-dubbed "social sciences" led by the scientists in work for the blind. These men are letting it be known that they would enjoy having a share of the glory and acclaim that accompanies publicly-supported research. These would-be soothsayers are saying in triumph, "The physical scientists have had

their innings. Now it is our turn for the big grants and the big prestige. It is our turn to show that we have the real answers to the process of thinking, whether it be discovering the ways to peace in the realm of international relations or, as it is in the case of the blind, how to take a bath!" Most of the gyrations of these latter-day oracles in work for the blind sound other-worldly, if not wholly without substance.

The disabled generally and the blind specifically economically, politically, and socially disadvantaged may find the struggle against the imposition of technocracy beyond their powers to resist. Lest anyone suspect the foregoing implies a total rejection of science, it will prove worthwhile to examine closely the difference between science and scientism.

Humans generally are wise and extremely careful when carrying out scientific research and its technical application. Usually men are astute and rational when they deal with items they see or hear and facts they record. However, men are complex creatures; and almost as if to balance the scales, they are frequently gullible and foolish. It goes without saying that when men fall into a naive or dupable mood, they are apt to make horrible miscalculations and are prone to take scientism seriously. Aside from human frailties, errors are made because of imprecise measures and confused verbal descriptions. Additionally, tools often lack precision and logic falls short of perfection.

In science it is critical to verify results, set up controls, have a decent respect for cause-and-effect relationships, and absolutely refuse to ignore discordant

facts or to neglect adverse findings. The really decisive measurements frequently are those that do not agree with previous observations or with some guiding theory. Always an explanation for any deviation should be sought. Deviations sometimes tell that the methods being used are faulty. At times, contrary findings help to identify factors which heretofore had been considered unrelated. Occasionally unexpected evidence has led to brilliant discoveries, and more to the point, has served to put a rash theory into a quiet grave.

The fundamental difference between science and non-science or scientism is that truly scientific endeavor is permeated thoroughly with objectivity. The authentic man of science searches for true answers and cares not, when he is laboring as a scientist, whether the results are pleasant or unpleasant. As a social being he may prefer or yearn for agreeable rather than fruitful discoveries. Nevertheless, as a scientist he must abide by his discoveries. A non-scientist preoccupied with astrology, alchemy, tea leaf fortune telling, or the modern propensity to create a new science, more often than not seeks answers that coincide with his personal wish or particular theory. In order to gain respectability for his discipline, he is likely to "doctor" his investigations to achieve the desired objective—witness the new degree, Doctor of Education-Vision. Mostly, he always knows the answer before conducting the so-called experiment or study. Often he thinks, though he does not admit it publicly, "I am going to prove my idea" instead of "I want to test my theory." "Furthermore," he thinks to himself, "should the test prove my hypothesis false, out goes the test."

Regrettably, for whatever reason, work for the blind has chosen the path of scientism. Despite innumerable cases of proficient sightless men and women who display adequate travel skills without the benefit of graduate majors in mobility, agencies and special education schools in several universities persist in turning out peripatologists. These self-anointed specialists continue to clutter and confuse a rather simple skill. Again, in the face of thousands of sightless individuals who somehow are able to feed and clothe themselves, graduate-level students with all of the pomp and prestige a university publication can muster, blithely publish manuals instructing the blind upon such profundities as methods of approaching the table or lacing the shoes.

The foregoing talk surrounding the renaissance of technocracy serves as a proper introduction to the contemporary phenomenon of specialization in academia. It is a legitimate issue of the day, and the response given will undoubtedly have profound repercussions on the future of the nation. To reiterate the question: How far should we encourage or permit ourselves to go into specialism? Besides the self-evident troubles that inescapably arise from academic insulation, intellectual isolation may represent a disguised attempt to evade responsibility. This consequence is of paramount importance. For unless we despair of the quality and function of education altogether, it rests with the trained mind to provide the remedies for the blatant ills that plague society.

Whereas Reformation scholars dwelt in ivory towers contemplating the number of angels that could stand on the head of a pin, their modern-day counterparts have

equally surrounded themselves with impenetrable iron curtains. These curtains display tiny peep holes through which only specialists of the same ilk may see (no doubt speculating about similar profound subjects). Through such artificial barriers, intellectual intercourse with the unschooled citizenry, as well as with scholars in other fields, is all but eliminated. These circumstances pose a grave threat to Western civilization at large. But to the blind—who perforce must be dependent upon the advice and counsel of the technocrats that now infest rehabilitation agencies and schools—the future is grim.

In ever-increasing numbers experts who have taken “special college courses” are finding their ways into rehabilitation programs. Unless this trend is stopped, it will not be long before the entire field of work for the blind is made over into a permanent private preserve for graduates of these dubious studies. Publications of recent vintage in work for the blind illustrate this trend perfectly. A sudden rash of manuals giving explicit instructions to the blind in everything from how to shake hands, sit in a chair, clean basins, clap hands, to holding the arm of a sighted guide properly, place a pan on a stove, trail walls, tie neckties, ad infinitum—are signed by such an array of experts and specialists as simply to overwhelm the uninformed layman. Needless to say, this is the precise intention. For it is by such means that well-meaning but unenlightened public and private officials loosen the purse strings to sponsor research and to provide jobs. Here is a randomly selected sample of specialists in work for the blind taken from recently by-lined publications. The catalog includes: instructor, personal management

services; specialists in rehabilitation; supervising instructor, hospital demonstration project, American Foundation for the Blind; director of training for the blind; director of IRIS, in department of research, American Foundation for the Blind; director of rehabilitation program for adult blind; public relations specialists for the blind; director of social and statistical research for the blind; facility specialists; an orientation officer; instructor, orientation and mobility; director, institute for blind rehabilitation; and assistant director, institute for blind rehabilitation-education services. Of course this list does not encompass such well-known specialists as peripatologists, recreationalists, and hosts of therapists now making their appearance on the scene. Recently there has come to the stage, front and center, the newest of these experts, Doctor of Special Education-Vision. It is now appropriate to look into the course of studies these would-be scholars would have us believe entitles them to best deal with the problems of the blind effectively.

An area of growing concern to the organized blind is the development of an almost entirely separate course of study for students wishing to enter the field of work for the blind (students who will one day be among the employees of agencies for the blind). It is not necessary to have Master's degrees in vision to work with the sightless. Rather than being helpful, these practices are proving detrimental. Yet this trend is already reaching alarming proportions. There are no less than 28 colleges and universities listed in the Directory of Services for the Visually Handicapped as having programs for those seeking professional training prior to entering the field of work for the blind.

The courses of study at these institutions (which are spread across the country) present the following dismal picture.

Courses which Master's degree candidates must take to prepare themselves for work with the blind include: the means and methods of evaluating emotionally those with severe visual handicaps; a study of the anatomy and function of the eye; low-vision aids practicum; the psychology of physical disabilities; methods and materials for mentally retarded; education of the emotionally disturbed; sociology and psychology of blindness; and introduction to communication disorders.

Even for teaching mobility or cane travel the required courses include: education of exceptional children, counseling and guidance for the handicapped, and introduction to communication development and disorders. Prospective applicants for orientation and mobility instruction are warned that "students must be in excellent physical health."

With such inconsequential content in graduate courses for those entering the field of work for the blind, is it any wonder that some agencies for the blind have faculty members who seriously check on their clients daily in such social conduct areas as: frequently pokes eyes, frequently flutters hands, frequently has a rocking motion, frequently Brailles visitors, doesn't take a daily bath, doesn't use a deodorant daily, doesn't change underclothing and socks daily, and so on ad nauseam?

"There are two opposing conceptions of the nature of blindness at large in the

world," said a blind man in 1970. "One of them holds that it is a nuisance and the other that it is a disaster. I think that it is clear that the disaster concept is widespread alike in popular culture and in the learned culture of the professionals. Moreover, I would submit that the concept itself is the real disaster--the only real disaster that we as blind people have to live with--and that when we can overcome this monstrous misconception, we shall bring down the curtain forever on the fictional drama entitled, 'The Tragedy of Blindness.' "

The speaker of these words was a totally blind American who is today the elected leader of tens of thousands of other blind men and women associated in the National Federation of the Blind. In his speech delivered at the 30th Anniversary Convention in Minneapolis, President Jernigan sought to put to rest forever the "disaster concept, the tragic sense of blindness" which he declared to be the worst handicap imposed by society upon its blind members.

To talk candidly about specialism and the education that fosters it in work for the blind is neither for the purpose of raising doubts about the motives of individuals who enter the field nor curricular designers who seek to find answers to real needs. There is a good deal of commentary in the country today about the ability of universities to cope with the serious ills of the time. Much of the criticism centers around the point: Is the education offered by the institutions of higher learning related to the needs of the citizenry? It is the contention here that not only is a considerable segment of the education in work for the blind misdirected, but that unless radical

changes occur soon, irreparable harm will be inflicted upon a sector of the population that can least afford it.

Earlier it was noted that the world of rehabilitation is in disarray and that discontent is everywhere visible. Surely the founding fathers of rehabilitation could not have envisioned a situation where clients of programs would have to institute legal proceedings to secure respect from the very people who are supposed to help them gain equality generally. Certainly Congress, in originating the rehabilitation program, looked to develop rather than to smother initiative for the clients. The view expressed here is that the rigidity manifested in work for the blind represents a spill-over from the technocracy that plagues the country at large. When institutions of higher learning fail to set apart and critically examine the actions of industry and government, there is no fermentive force working. The university becomes a collection of technicians similar to a service station with the aim of graduating better and better technocrats for the evolving technological society. The inescapable result is the freezing of opinion and the installation of King Conformity—where every peg fits into a predetermined niche.

In its broadest context, the agonizing appraisal which the country is undergoing is what one writer has labeled “a protest against the belittling of man, against his debasement, against a society that makes it lawful to exploit humans.” From every corner of the land data is compiled demonstrating that society is surfeited with goods, and that marketing and advertising techniques make it possible to call upon all manner of gadgetry to satisfy

whatever whim. Yet, there is evidence aplenty that as a people we are neither happy nor free. Doubtless there are many facets to the manifest discontent, but they all boil down to what is named “the diminished man.” There is more knowledge and information about everything than ever before. Experts have so multiplied that the ordinary individual has a sense of depression and impotence. Indeed, man justifiably flees as though he is about to be delivered to “them.” Of course the disabled already have.

As an individual of worth, dignity, and creativity, and as a being of limitless potential, man cowers before the onslaught of the forces which seek to obliterate and dehumanize him. Yet in spite of it all, should he prevail, the present episode could be a reaffirmation of the belief in man, a modern version of the Renaissance which preceded the Age of Enlightenment. By one means or another man must come forward with the solution. He must avoid the schemes which prepare him to think alike and meekly be submissive to the technocrats. Everyone knows with what rapidity man can be made over into a servile creature. The process is much easier in a vast computerized industrialized complex.

Somehow, man must regain the freedom of choice that is all but lost, and for the disabled hardly a memory. To be free, to be master of one's destiny, that is at the root of the discontent. Everyone acknowledges that technology may be either toxic or tonic. But perhaps what everybody is slow to recognize is that under the cloak of efficiency and expertise Americans are being lulled into accepting docile cultural uniformity.

Life has a tendency to lapse into stupefying dullness. It would be vastly duller, but for the variety of people one meets resulting from the diversity in their habits, mores, and intellectual actions. To ensure the survival of this precious diversity, to the end of enhancing the degree of satisfaction with life and opportunity for artistic intelligent growth, requires immediate mobilization to wage an unceasing war against real foes. Means must be found to vigorously oppose those pressures toward standardization and cultural homogeneity which symbolize the unspoken goals of unthinking bureaucrats. Everywhere man is commanded to give his personal history whether or not such information has any relevance or value. The trend of these increasing invasions of privacy is the creation of a creeping conformity that makes man timid in his thinking when contemporary society demands bold and adventuresome approaches. The leveling effects of these numerous influences are frightening and appalling. Yet, as the Houston confrontation with the National Accreditation Council clearly illustrates, it is literally impossible to engage in a meaningful dialogue or to exchange views. This is attributable to the propensity for conformity by agencies in work for the blind.

The intensifying crisis of confidence in American education is now approaching the momentum of an avalanche that may prove difficult to retard once the impetus is fully under way. This incipient avalanche has its origins, not in any lack of respect or failure of recognition of the importance given the entire spectrum of schooling in the classical sense (as the medium for developing human genius through the gaining of knowledge of the

total environment), but for its new bent toward the creation of a technocratic world. The crisis of doubt surrounding education has its roots in over-concern with science and would-be scientists. These would-be scientists have sought increasingly to utilize methods applicable to the physical world, to the realm of men which is beyond the scientific approach--human goals and purposes, human priorities, and the well-springs of human motivation.

In the emerging contest against the deadening centralizing manipulation of the minds and mores of the people, there is a happy struggle that all should be eager to join. The responsibilities and opportunities for truly professional men and women, scientists and artists, laymen and artisans, all kinds of people embrace a social duty on a high level. For our own security and for the sake of human integrity, we must not, indeed we cannot leave to uniformity-producing forces, effete academicians, or faceless bureaucrats the shaping of the future either for the individual or the community. If the blind are to escape the standardization which is the inevitable consequence of present practices in work for the visually handicapped, then the blind must take up the burden of awakening the general public to our peril. For if the pseudoscientists succeed in putting the disabled into a straitjacket, can the able-bodied be far behind?

In the foreword to the book, *1984*, the statement appears: "This book is one of the modern classics of what has been called the negative utopia; a drama, not of what life might be, but a nightmare of what it is becoming." Working together we shall avert such a calamity.

MONITOR MINIATURES

Elverna Kezar, editor of the *Minnesota Bulletin*, writes that ordinarily agencies for the blind ask everyone except blind people for advice or assistance. But Minnesota is making some headway, probably because six visually handicapped people now sit on the board of the Minneapolis Society for the Blind. She asks us to consider the following letter from their Gift Shop Committee: "The Minneapolis Society for the Blind is selling original art Christmas cards again this year, and we are seeking paintings or designs created by visually handicapped persons. Art work should be suitable for a Christmas card. We anticipate a tremendous growth in this project, and all profits assist rehabilitation programs for blind and visually handicapped persons in this community." Elverna reports that six original designs were used last year, but all were submitted by totally sighted artists. The good committee ladies said this was because they didn't know how to inform large numbers of blind people about the project. It is always dangerous to say, "A visually handicapped person can't do that," because someone always turns up who can.

Robert McDonald, president of the Virginia Federation of the Blind, tells us that the Piedmont Federation of the Blind is a new chapter of the VFB, organized in Hamilton, Virginia. Already the new group is making plans for a white cane pin sale in May.

The Hadley School for the Blind of

Winnetka, Illinois announces that expanded facilities now make it possible for the School to accept 300 additional students for its free, accredited correspondence courses. These include Braille reading and writing, typing, spelling, math, and learning a foreign language, etc. For full details write to 700 Elm Street, Winnetka, Illinois 60093.

Any person who does not have a driver's license and could use some type of positive identification for cashing checks can make application for the United States Citizenship Identification Card by writing to the nearest Immigration and Naturalization Service office. The identification card costs \$10 and photographs are required. Any American citizen, born here or naturalized, can get the card.

The *Month's News*, published by the Illinois Congress of the Blind, contains the following: "During the past month two separate events have placed in clear focus two contrasting philosophies of life, and reflected both the progress we have already made toward equality and opportunity and the stumbling block which still remains in our path. Mrs. Mabel Wilcox is a blind senior citizen who recently applied to the Chicago Housing Authority for a high-rise apartment for herself and her guide dog. Can you honestly think of a more normal and wholesome request? Surely not! Yet, CHA apparently did, since it denied Mrs. Wilcox this fundamental right to four walls and a roof of her own choosing, claiming that high-rises with elevators were no place for

blind people with dogs. Mrs. Wilcox was undaunted and, buoyed by the spirit of our White Cane Law and the new Illinois constitution, she filed suit against the CHA for outright discrimination. At its February meeting, the Chicago Congress of the Blind resolved to assist Mrs. Wilcox and her attorney, and, if possible, file a Friend of the Court brief in the case. In striking contrast with Mrs. Wilcox's attitude, we found Don Nold editorializing as follows in the Spring, 1972 issue of *Dialogue*: '*Dialogue* deplores the use of militancy and public vilification to call attention to needs of the blind . . . it urges its readers to look like, think like and act like sighted people as much as possible. It will continue in this positive attitude in years to come, noting that no one likes a complainer.' It hardly seems possible that in 1972, Nold still spouts the medieval shame of blindness and the philosophy of "sight is right," evoking the inferior and undignified status of blind people so common centuries ago. Would not he who urges us to 'look like, think like, and act like sighted people as much as possible' also urge Mrs. Wilcox to dispense with her dog? And if she refused, at least quit complaining, for 'no one likes a complainer'? No one, that is, who has nothing to complain about!"

Frank Sinatra will head the public education campaign of the National Society for the Prevention of Blindness. Sinatra takes over the post held for three years by Bing Crosby.

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permission: Bill Thielke thinks nothing of climbing a ladder and putting up a television antenna, even on an icy roof. It's all part of the job in operating Bill's Radio and TV shop in Preston, a town of 1,400 in southeastern Minnesota. But Thielke is different from the average shop owner. He is blind. He takes a tumble now and then. Once he landed in a garbage can, once in a flower bed. But he hasn't been seriously hurt in 18 years on the job. "Some people wonder how a blind man can work on a roof," the 48-year-old Thielke says. "Two important assets are a tremendous grip and a good memory. I can support my weight with a single finger. I work around the roof top very carefully and if I feel myself slipping, I can grab hold of the eaves or the antenna mast."

Dr. Mae Davidow, president of the Pennsylvania Federation of the Blind, writes: "I am constantly receiving requests as to where to send eyeglasses overseas, since they do *not* come to me any longer. Mr. Samuel Galt of Pier 38, South, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19147, who is in charge has asked that the glasses be sent directly (prepaid) to: CARE, Inc. 156-3, Pier 38 South, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19147. Please print this information as soon as possible."

The Massachusetts Institute of Technology's Sensory Aids Evaluation and Development Center has developed a "cable cane" which folds into a compact eight-inch bundle. It is constructed of aluminum tubing segments containing a steel cable which is pulled right to keep

the extended cane rigid.

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The *Newsletter* of the Tar Heel Federation of the Blind (North Carolina) reports that the Wachovia Bank and Trust Company, a banking house with over one hundred and fifty banks in more than fifty cities in the State, has come up with a plan which will protect the banking privacy and revolutionize banking for blind persons in North Carolina. We deeply appreciate this innovation which is explained in full in a recent news release that was prepared by the bank and is as follows: "Wachovia Bank and Trust Company has announced that after the first of the year it will begin a system which will allow non-sighted customers to write their own checks, maintain their own check books and balance their accounts each month without assistance from anyone. The system involves the use of a script and Braille guide called the Checkwriter, an aluminum template with horizontal writing slots from the date, payee, amount and signature, along with Braille cells for the transcription of necessary information. All a blind person has to do to begin using this new service is to contact one of Wachovia's offices. Wachovia will bear all costs for the templates and checks. Customers using this service will receive on a monthly basis, two checking account statements—one printed in normal fashion and the other printed in Braille. 'We believe this device will mean more to the blind people in North Carolina than anything we could have done,' a Wachovia spokesman said."

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The NFB of the District of Columbia

will hold its third annual convention on May 6, 1972 at the Holiday Inn Central, 1501 Rhode Island Avenue, N.W. Registration begins at 8:30 a.m. and the day's activities will end with a banquet. The two previous conventions have produced lively discussions and interesting exchanges of information. All Federationists and interested visitors are welcome to attend.

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Would you believe that it would take an act of the Legislature for the Maine Council of the Blind to change its name to The National Federation of the Blind of Maine? It's true, writes Natalie Matthews, Legislative Chairman. On February 11th of this year Governor Curtis signed into law the bill changing the name of our Maine affiliate. This is a Special Session of the Maine Legislature and all bills are supposed to be of an emergency nature—perhaps your bill really qualified, Natalie. Congratulations!

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Our most faithful correspondent from Massachusetts, Rosamond Critchley, tells us that the Massachusetts Commission for the Blind has notified all blind persons in the Commonwealth that they may now telephone the Commission from any telephone in the State beyond the Boston area for the cost of a local call only. In addition to this service, the Commission now has a local representative in each of five key cities. If the direct line to the Commission is tied up, the person calls this representative who has the time to keep trying to get through to the Commission and will get the message through to the proper person or

department. These representatives are all blind persons, well acquainted with most of the blind people in their respective communities. Let's chalk up another "first" for the Commission's Executive Director, John Mungovan!

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A five-year-old part-Siamese cat has exploded the myth that all cats do is play with yarn. The cat is a guide for a blind lady living in San Diego and does everything a similarly trained dog would do. The cat, wearing a special harness, even takes her mistress into the neighborhood so she can do her shopping. The mistress, blind for fifteen years, trained the cat herself, using the principles she had learned while attending a club for blind persons.

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James M. MacFarland, publicity chairman for the Roswell Chapter of the NFB of New Mexico, writes that "The Chapter scored a significant success in its first sponsored public project. Net proceeds totalling approximately \$600 resulted from a Pancake Breakfast held at the Roswell Family YMCA on Saturday morning, February 26.

"Thanks to three advance stories and announcements in the local daily newspapers and over the three Roswell radio stations, and a live TV interview featuring members of the breakfast committee, almost 600 tickets were sold even before the event took place. Another 200 tickets were sold at the door.

"The breakfast itself, which attracted 455 people, was covered by the local TV

station and results of the successful affair were carried in the newspapers and in spot radio newscasts. Two professional chefs donated their services, members of the local high school girls clubs did the serving, several other businessmen aided in the cooking, and the YMCA provided the building and its facilities without charge.

"The \$600 has been placed in a fund to provide college scholarships for blind students. The chapter was organized in October 1971 and George Largent, a blind resident who is being trained as a masseur, was elected president. Bryan Banister, blind Roswell YMCA health club director, was named vice president. The treasurer is George Cox, a blind employee in the New Mexico Military Institute laundry, and the secretary is Mrs. Daisy Banister."

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Perry Daggett operates a speed lathe at Leupold & Stevens, Inc., in Beaverton, Oregon, turning out tubing for rifle scopes which the firm manufactures. Daggett is totally blind and after four weeks on the job his production rate was at least equal to and, in some cases, higher than the average employee . . . doing the same work. He received his basic training at Clackamas Community College which has a special machine technology course for blind students. The instructor was Russell Harris who thinks positively about the abilities of the blind. The placement officer, Bill Wollam, also thinks in terms of the abilities of the blind and placed six blind persons in the space of a few months in regular industrial jobs. [The above is from an article written by Dennis McCarthy in the *Oregon Journal*, of Portland, Oregon.]

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The Sun (Schylar, Nebraska) reports that Emil J. Brodecky and his wife opened a restaurant in south Lincoln which is very popular with the blind residents of the area. Menus are regularly supplied in Braille as well as in print, which makes dining out more pleasurable for their blind patrons.

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The Houston, Texas *Post* carried a story about blind Diana Alexander, student at Austin University, who spent the Christmas holiday in Colorado with her parents and learned to ski "from every lift" on the mountain in four days.

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